

New York Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 272.

"MAY."

BY FRANK M. IMBRIE.

"Come, my thrush, we'll hie to the meadows!
Your free mates are trilling a welcome to-day,
Ripples and rustle of brooklets and grasses
Are wooing me too from all home cares away;
You'll learn from wood-choristers, caroling
sweetly,
New notes, shrill and clear, for a blithe roundelay;
Whilst I, prisoned human, will sip in the nectar
Of God's air and sunshine as hither I stray.
Perchance, as I wander and gaze on the beauty
Of hawthorn buds bursting, of wild larkspur
blows;
Who knows but by chance some one may be passing,
Some one who calls me his 'May-bloom'—who
knows?
He once said my hands were as white as May lilies,
My face was as pure as its chalice of snow;
Maybe he'll say that I'm fairer than ever—
But this is the month for 'May-bees,' you know!
How happy I was when we strolled by the brook-
side,
The zephyrs thrummed quaintly on sunlit
harp,
And quivering, kissed the sly, coquetting waters,
Affrighting the swift-darting grayling and carp.
I know that the May-woods looked brighter and
cooler,
For a whisper, so olden, stole down the green
aisles
And paused, like a witness, 'neath tall forest-
guardians
Revering our vows, leaving blushes and smiles.
But ah, I've forgotten my errand here, surely;
I failed to remember how spring breezes fan;
This artist's choice colors are health-brown and
crimson.
And I must be fair if I possibly can!
I've heard another say—his faded, I'll warrant—
That there's virtue in dew as it clings to the
grass;
'Tis the pure bloom of youth' prepared by Dame
Nature,
Whose priceless cosmetics are slighted, alas!"
Down went the lily-bud hands 'midst the dew-
drops,
The bright globules spraying the fair, dimpled
face;
The thrush looked on wisely with sharp, blinking
glances.
A form bounded near her with hurrying pace.
"Aha, I have found you—but why this confusion?
What dew-drops astray in your eyes, pansy-
blue?
Do you know what you are now, my nimbus-
crowned Nereid?
My 'May-blossom' freshened and sparkling with
dew!"

Tiger Dick:

OR, THE CASHIER'S CRIME.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

CHAPTER IV. TIGER DICK.

ON the afternoon of the day when Cecil Beaumont first saw the Kentuckian whose appearance had so strangely affected him—half an hour before they met on the crossing—Fred Powell drove up to the post-office and alighted, leaving Florence Goldthorp in the carriage. Fred had scarcely entered the building when a gust of wind whirled a piece of paper under the horse's feet. The spirited animal uttered a cry of fright, and after a plunge or two, set off at a break-neck pace down the street.

Pale with alarm, yet with a presence of mind unusual in one of her sex, Florence grasped the reins and tried to check his course; but in her feeble hands he was wholly unmanageable.

Vehicles prudently drew aside to the curbstone. Well-meaning persons, whose zeal exceeded their wisdom, vied with each other in giving utterance to a chorus of hallos that would have done credit to a war-party of Comanches. A fat man in his shirt-sleeves ran out into the middle of the street, wildly swinging a straw hat and shouting "whoa!" at the top of his voice, until the horse got within half a dozen rods of him, when he beat a hasty retreat to the security of the sidewalk, exciting a ghastly sort of amusement, even in the face of the awful danger.

One man seemed possessed of the presence of mind, nerve and address to do something besides augment the general confusion. He quietly stepped into the street, and caught the horse, in passing, by the bit. He was nearly thrown from his feet, but succeeded in stopping the runaway.

A barefooted urchin, proud to be in some way associated with the hero of the occasion, restored his hat. He quietly drew his handkerchief about it, to remove the dirt, placed it on his head, and then received his gold-headed cane from another young American (of foreign descent) whose toilet consisted of brimless straw hat, shirt, trousers (that had suffered abrasion in the usual places) and one suspender.

Meanwhile the customary crowd had gathered around the carriage.

"Help the lady out," said a corpulent gentleman, who wore a fob-chain and English gaiters, and had a very red face and a head as smooth as a billiard-ball.

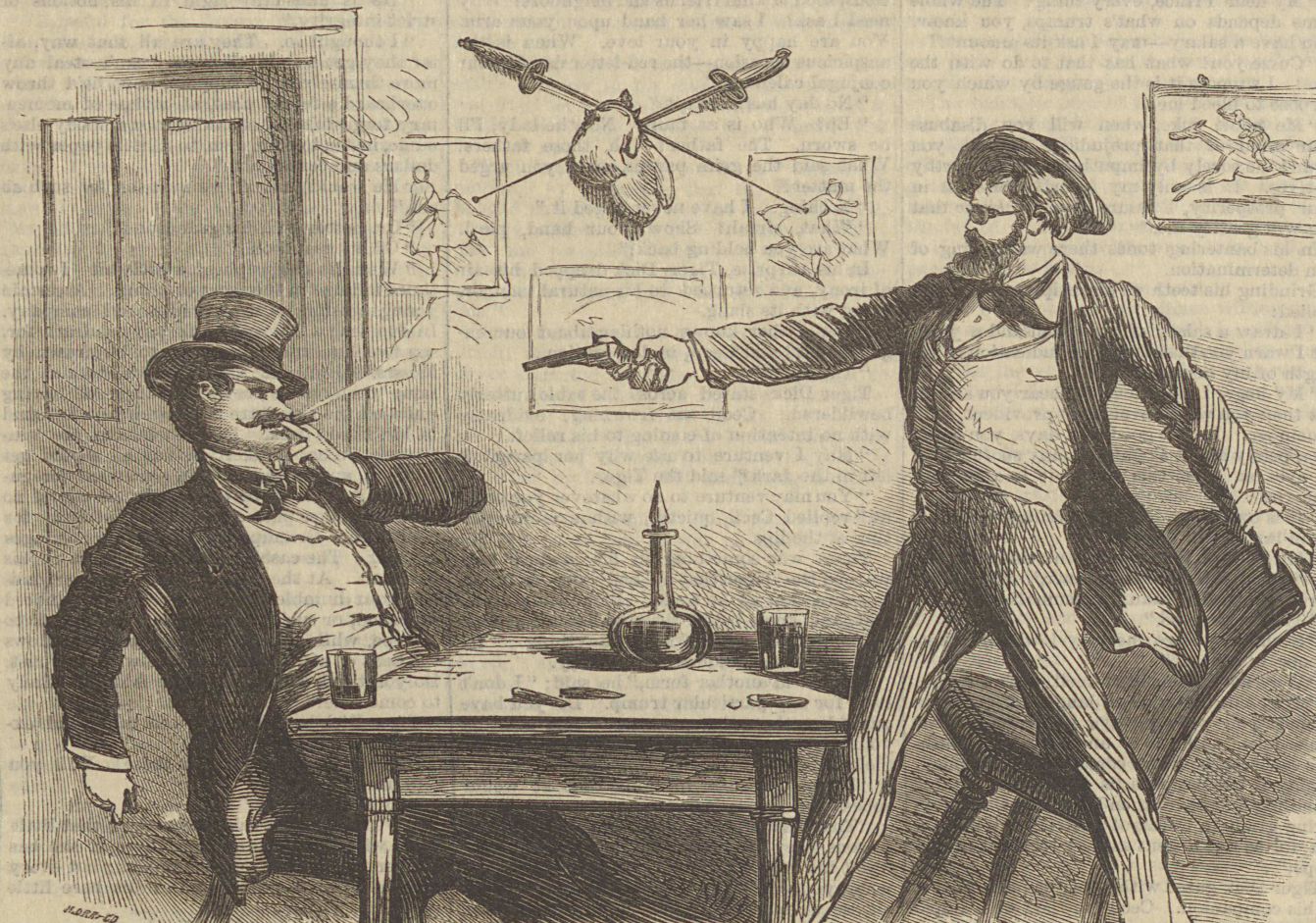
"Who's hurt?" cried a reporter, coming up out of breath, eager for an item.

"May I assist you to alight, madam?" politely asked a spruce counter-jumper with waxed mustache and perfumed hair.

But, turning from these, Florence leaned out of the carriage, and extending her hand to her preserver, said:

"Oh, sir! I cannot express my gratitude for your noble daring. You have probably saved my life. I hope you are not hurt."

"Not in the least, madam," replied her rescuer, lifting his hat with courtly grace, as if nothing unusual had happened, and accepting her hand.



Cecil leaped to his feet, and covered the other with his weapon.

His sudden smile disclosed a row of even, white teeth, in almost startling contrast with his raven mustache. Florence started slightly. The peculiarity of his smile was surprising, yet not unpleasant. But the open admiration of his gaze was so undisguised that it brought a tinge of embarrassment to her cheeks.

At this point Fred came up, pale with concern for the safety of his companion. When he noted the look of the stranger and its effect on Florence, a flash of resentment came into his eye and a haughtiness into his mien.

"Believe me, sir," he said, "I have a deep sense of indebtedness to you for what you have done. Accept my card, and if I can ever requite the service, command me, with the assurance that it will be a pleasure to do my utmost."

He thrust his card into the hand of the other, leaped into the carriage, and gathering up the reins, dashed out of the crowd.

The stranger received the card mechanically; stared a moment in surprise after the retreating carriage; and then, as an angry frown depressed the center of the straight line formed by his brows, turned on his heel, to hide his chagrin, biting his lip and crushing the card in his palm.

"There's royalty for you," laughed a man who prided himself on his democratic ideas. "To judge from his air, we might think that the young buck was apologizing to our friend here for having inadvertently spat mud on his boots, instead of thanking him for the life, perhaps, of a young lady."

"How would you like to have a gay young cavalier, with such a killing mustache, make eyes at your ladylove in the open street, hey?" asked another observing individual, at whose humor the crowd laughed, and then dispersed.

These words reached the ears of the stranger before he gained the sidewalk, and he ground his teeth with inward rage.

"The upstart puppy!" he muttered, between his teeth. "I suppose he resented the way I looked at the girl. By heavens! she's a beauty! Such eyes, and such an air—she gave me her hand with the grace of a queen!"

Florence was surprised at the brusque manner in which her lover had treated her preserver.

"Fred," she said, "couldn't you have shown that gentleman a little more courtesy? You were hardly civil. And I wished to learn his name, so that papa could thank him, too."

"I thought that the debt was in part canceled by the insolent stare with which he regarded you," replied Fred, the indignant flash still in his eye.

Florence had forgotten her momentary embarrassment. She crimsoned slightly at this reminder.

"Who is he?" she asked. "Did you ever see him before?"

"He has been pointed out to me," replied Fred, reddening in turn, for some reason or other.

"What is his name? Do you know?"

"I believe he goes under the sobriquet of 'Tiger Dick,' or something of that kind; but I never heard his real name," replied Fred, still more embarrassed.

"Tiger Dick?" repeated Florence, in surprise. "Why, how can he have got such a strange name as that?"

"He is not a man of very high repute, I believe. A gambler or something of that sort. That class of people usually pride themselves in sounding titles."

Florence relapsed into silence, with a medi-

tative look in her eyes. She was thinking of the vikings and the sturdy old knights of chivalry, who in many points failed to conform to our modern code of morals. She mentally pronounced the stranger a fine-looking man, and his questionable mode of life threw around him a spice of romance. She thought him a Dick Turpin, who, while he might fleece the rich and oppressive, was all of kindness to the suffering, and all of gentleness to the beautiful. How nearly correct was her estimate of the character of Tiger Dick will appear in the course of our story.

Meanwhile the Tiger pursued his walk, far from being in the best of humors. It was while seeking a restaurant where he was in the habit of taking his meals, that he came upon Cecil and May, after their drive on the avenue. At sight of Cecil, a gleam of malicious satisfaction came into his eyes.

"Aces all, by Jove!" he muttered. "Just what I've been figuring for. Truly the devil feels his own."

He saw May touch her companion's arm. Cecil turned to look. Then the Tiger lifted his hat and smiled, with all the devil of his nature in his eyes. With a thrill of triumph he saw Cecil's face assume a livid hue, saw him reel beneath the shock of terror, saw him snatch the reins from May's hands and fly by as if pursued by all the fiends.

"Hah! A center shot, that!" chuckled the Tiger, caressing his mustache with immense satisfaction. "Struck him all in a heap, by Jove! Ha! ha! no noble jukes! no more of your capering. You gave me the slip cunningly enough in New York; but if you hold over me this time, why, you're welcome to make the board—that's all!"

He reached the restaurant, and ate his supper with a gusto.

"Those drops of terror wrung from the brow of the Prince are not bad sauce," he meditated. "Where's all his spirit, I wonder? Rocks! In the good old days he would have let daylight through me, sooner than throw up his hand like that. But he has never held up his head since that game when the little joker turned up so unexpectedly—only once, confound him! but then it was a spiteful fling."

Tiger Dick ran his fingers through his hair until they touched a livid scar on the side of his head, as broad as his finger and a couple of inches in length.

"Oh, well," he said, lightly, "I'm not the cuss to whine over that. He played his highest trump and is welcome to the trick. But now it's my turn. Every dog has his day, and luck is bound to turn some time."

From the restaurant, Tiger Dick went to No. 149 River street. Avoiding the front entrance, he passed in at a side door, and having traversed a narrow hall, found himself in a little room at the back. It was furnished with a table (on which were decanters and wine-glasses), two or three chairs, and a couch spread with a buffalo-robe. The walls were decorated with pictures illustrative of scenes in the life of a "sport." Over the couch was a pair of crossed foils, and from the nail which supported them hung a pair of boxing-gloves.

Tiger Dick pulled a bell-cord, and in response to his summons appeared a boy, in his shirt-sleeves, and with a small white apron tied about his waist.

"Has Jim come in yet?" asked the Tiger.

"No—not since supper," was the reply.

"Well, when he puts in an appearance, send him here. And, Tommy, tell McFarland and O'Toole to report—sharp; it's business."

As the boy disappeared, Tiger Dick drew writing materials before him, and wrote:

"Go home and await my summons. If you persist in flight, you will be denounced and put under arrest on the arrival of the train at the first station. You have been under surveillance for more than a week. My emissaries are ever at your elbow."

He wrote a second note like the above, making suitable changes so that it would apply to a steamboat. He had scarcely finished when in came two men whose appearance sufficiently indicated their disreputable character.

"Well, gentlemen," said the Tiger, "I've got a little business for you to-night. You both know the sport that calls himself Cecil Beaumont—a bank cashier?"

The men nodded assent.

"Well, I want you, Mac, to go to the levee—there's one of the Diamond Jo line down to-night—and you, O'Toole, to the depot; and if our bird tries to take wing, and I am not on hand, give him this note, just before the boat (or train, as the case may be) leaves. But if I am around, mind you do nothing. Now, look sharp, and report again at midnight."

The men received each his note and withdrew.

A few minutes later the door opened to give admittance to a young man who rejoiced in the suggestive name of Shadow Jim. He was slight in build, and his life of dissipation found its index in bloodshot eyes and sallow cheeks. He was at present dressed so as to be least likely to attract attention.

"So-long! me noble jukes!" said the Tiger, greeting him pleasantly. "What's the word?"

"He is at home," replied Jim, sitting astride a chair with his arms resting on the back.

"Good! And how does he look?"

"As if he had the devil for a bedfellow," was the expressive reply.

The Tiger laughed.

"Shadow, smile, do," he said, pushing a decanter across the table.

Jim smiled literally, with a beaming radiance, as he poured out the liquor; and then, holding it between his eye and the light, said, as if apologizing to his conscience, or, perhaps, his stomach:

"If Timothy partook, why not I? It's as harmless as a dove!"

He shut his eyes as the liquor glided down his throat, and then placed the glass on the table, with a little sigh of enjoyment, looking at it fondly, almost sadly.

Tiger Dick watched him with an amused smile, and then burst into a laugh.

"By Jove, Shadow," he said, "it's better than drinking oneself, to see you get outside of a glass of benzine. If I could coax so much bliss out of the fire-water, I'd ask no greater favor of Heaven."

"But this ain't business," he added, briskly. "I came face to face with our gosling this afternoon. I know that he will try to slip through my fingers, and have sent McFarland and O'Toole to the train and boat, to clip his wings. This is in case he gets the start of me; but I mean to be on hand myself to meet him. Do I make a good Gorgon?"

Tiger Dick smiled his peculiar smile, the white teeth glittering like cruel fangs, his eyes gleaming malicious triumph from beneath his straight brows, which, when depressed in the center, gave him an appearance not unlike the popular representation of "the gentleman in black."

"I think that Dr. Faustus would have flown to the devil for protection, had you appeared

on the stage with that look," was the flattering assurance of Shadow Jim.

"Smile again, my infant," said the Tiger, not ill pleased. "I'll not break in upon your little heaven with the paltry affairs of this mundane sphere, but wait until you return to earth."

Jim set his glass down on the table and looked at the Tiger expectantly.

"You must shadow this dainty cashier, Jim, and if he is likely to escape, give him this love-letter. I am not much afraid that he will disregard my other missives, if it is necessary to give them to him; but I want the trap tight, and we can't take too many precautions. If I scare him home, do you get there a few minutes before him and leave the letter. And now to business. I may take a look in on him myself, as the shadows deepen, just to give him a smile of encouragement, you know."

And, with a laugh, he arose and led the way to the open air. He stopped to lock the door, and when he turned about, Jim had disappeared like a veritable shadow.

The reader has seen that the Tiger did look in upon Cecil, and what was the effect; also the maneuvering at the depot and at the steamboat. We may add that Shadow Jim purposely let Cecil know that he was followed, to heighten the effect, and that Cecil's seeing McFarland on the street, after he had vainly tried to shake off Shadow Jim, was an accident, favorable, however, to the plotters.

When the Tiger had played his part, he returned to River street, elated at his success, to await the coming of Cecil Beaumont, of whose compliance with his demand he had no doubts.

CHAPTER V.

THE TIGER SPORTS WITH HIS PREY.

THE cool irony of the letter which summoned Cecil Beaumont to No. 49 River street, struck a chill of despair to his soul. The Tiger, like his ferocious namesake, was playing with his prey before devouring it.

With a shudder, Cecil heard the clock strike ten. Its monotonous throb sounded like a knell.

"It is destiny," he said, with a superstitious thrill that was a legacy from his early life. "There's no use fighting against it. I feel it drawing me down, down to perdition!"

He drew the pistol from his pocket, with a wild desperation, and for a moment he was nearer suicide than men often are, and yet escape. But he turned shuddering away.

"No," he muttered, "that is not my appointed death. I cannot escape that way, even if I had the courage. No, no; I must drag the galling chain of my bondage to the bitter end. But, curse him!" he added, his eyes glowing like coals, "we go down together! He escaped once; he shall not do so a second time."

He looked again to the loading of the weapon and placed it in his pocket. Then he drew from the satchel, which he had previously packed, a set of false whiskers and a wig, to which was attached a pair of spectacles. With these he effectually disguised himself, and then quietly left the house.

"It wouldn't do for Cecil Beaumont, a bank cashier, to be seen entering a gambling-den," he muttered, with a bitter laugh. "I must play the game out to the last. Who knows what may turn up. Why did not this fool balance our account at once? He evidently means to use me for something. I'll warrant he'll find me a slippery customer, and he may get a leaden pill that will cure all his ills."

Revolving in his mind plans for circumventing his enemy, Cecil found himself in River street. Just across the way was an illuminated sign, the letters formed of glass brilliants, as follows:

149 THE JUNGLE. 149

While Cecil was reading it, a hand tapped him lightly on the shoulder.

"You have an appointment with Tiger Dick?" asked a voice at his elbow.

Cecil turned with a start. He had not heard the man's approach. It was McFarland. "What do you know about my appointments?" demanded Cecil, with a frown.

"Your Grace is in an ill-humor this evening," said McFarland, meaningly.

"Who are you? What do you mean?" asked Cecil, the arrogance of his tone giving place to a tremor of apprehension.

The man smiled.

"I'm a sport as gets my beer-money from Tiger Dick," he replied, in his natural voice. "My handle's McFarland, at your service."

"And he stationed you here?"

"To wait you up to the captain's office, as quick as you clipped in."

"Did he expect any one?" asked Cecil, careful not to commit himself.

"He 'peared sorter confident as you'd come to time," replied McFarland, with a grin.

"Show me to him," said Cecil, with desperate calmness.

The confidence of Tiger Dick in his power weighed like a hand of iron on the quailing soul of his victim.

McFarland turned upon his heel, and conducted him by the side entrance into the presence of the Tiger. He was reading a paper, but threw it aside at Cecil's entrance, and greeted him, with a smile that chilled him to the heart.

"Ah, Prince! let me commend your gracious promptness. Accept the homage of your most humble liege."

He pushed forward a chair, and Cecil seated himself.

"Let us have no shilly-shally, but come to business. What do you want?"

"An old want with me—money, for one thing," said the Tiger, smiling. "But before we proceed to that, I have a little story which I wish to recount—some reminiscences, in fact, which I know you will be pleased to have recalled. And what so appropriate, when friends meet, as to go over old times?"

"I care nothing for your reminiscences," replied Cecil, with a frown, yet he could scarcely repress a shudder. "You did not summon me here to listen to chin-music. Come, make up your game, and we'll have a square deal."

The old life was cropping out in his speech, reappearing in the *patois* of slang peculiar to the class represented by the Tiger.

"Now, my dear Prince," protested the Tiger, with undisturbed equanimity, "you know my methodical way. I'm something of a conservative, and there's nothing like time-honored customs. From time immemorial, newly-united friends have found their chief enjoyment in recalling the pleasant scenes of the past—with the enchantment of distance, you know. What better can we do than to follow the beaten path?"

"But," he pursued, an undercurrent of deep significance flowing beneath his air of complaisance, "the story has some exciting passages. See, I am willing to treat you with perfect fairness," he pushed across the table one of two pistols that lay before him. "I do not even request you to lay aside your spectacles, though they kill the glances of those innocent eyes of yours."

"Keep your weapon," replied Cecil, pushing it back to him. "If you had intended to shoot me, I should never have been here."

"That's so, sport, as sure as you are a living man!"

There was an intensity of earnestness in Tiger Dick's voice and look that made Cecil pale in spite of himself.

"And now to my tale," said the Tiger, recovering his bantering humor.

It was a cruel story. All the wretched past was dragged into view, and its scenes of shame and iniquity painted in such vivid colors, that it almost drove the listener distracted. Before it was half through, he sprang to his feet with livid lips and horror-distended eyes, and beads of agony glistening on his forehead.

"Stop, you devil!" he cried, thrusting his hand into the breast of his coat for his revolver.

Not a muscle of Tiger Dick's face moved. There was the smile of flendish delight. With-out any apparent haste or perturbation, he took up one of the pistols, and, with his elbow resting on the table, covered Cecil Beaumont's heart with the weapon.

"Take your wing out of there, my pigeon," he said, quietly, yet with a deadly purpose in his eye. "Whenever you want one of these here little bull-dogs, you can have your choice; but no mongrels in this pit, if you please."

The cool tones of the Tiger, and the knowledge that nothing but a hair-trigger stood between him and death, quieted Cecil's excitement, and he drew forth his hand and flung himself into his chair in desperation.

"Curse you! show your gab and come to business. What do you want of me?" he asked, doggedly.

"Softly, me noble juke!" said his tormentor, tormentingly. "You interrupted me in the middle of my story. It has a denouement, which, I flatter myself, is quite effective, and, withal, the most delightful part of the story."

Cecil shuddered.

"And must I listen to your flendish recital?"

The Tiger smiled his blandest smile.

"Upon my soul, I see no way out of it."

"Go on," growled Cecil, gnashing his teeth savagely. "You hold trumps to-day; but, curse you! my turn will come, and you will find me equally merciful."

"That's right, Prince. I love to hear you talk in that way. It sounds like the good old days. Curse me! it makes me feel like a boy again. But to resume. Let me see, where did I leave off? Oh!"

He began again, dwelling on each salient point, seeming to roll it under his tongue, like some toothsome morsel. His victim writhed under his words; but every quiver, every contraction of the muscles, caused a thrill of delight to the human tiger.

"Oh, what a pretty tale to tell to the magistrates," he said, in conclusion. "I seem to see the densely-packed court-room; the spectators gazing in horror at the prisoner, while the judge dons his black cap and sentences him to be hanged by the neck until he be dead—dead! And then the gallows—the surging throng—the yells and jeers—the awful moment of breathless suspense; then the drop and the distorted writhing of the doomed wretch!"

"Stop! stop!" yelled Cecil, wrought to frenzy.

With a swift motion he grasped one of the pistols which lay on the table, and at the same time swept the other to the floor. The Tiger was taken completely off his guard. Cecil's head had been resting on his arms, and Tiger Dick did not look for such a move as this. Cecil leaped to his feet, and covered the other with his weapon.

"Ha! ha!" he cried, with exultation; "what's trumps now?"

Tiger Dick sat still; not a muscle relaxed; he regarded the other with the same unchanged smile.

"Curse you! why do you sit there, grinning like the fiend you are?" demanded Cecil, surprised at the nonchalance of the other.

Tiger Dick blew a curl of smoke from between his lips, and watched it with steady composure, as it ascended to the ceiling.

"Do you realize that only a feather's weight bars your soul from perdition?" asked Cecil, in greater wonder.

"More than that," answered Tiger Dick, with apparent unconcern.

"More! What more?"

The Tiger smiled, with a little shrug of the shoulders. He withdrew his cigar, blew another wreath of smoke into the air, and then, fixing his gaze upon Cecil with a magnetic intensity, said, simply:

"The gallows!"

All of the horrible scene that a moment before had goaded him to frenzy, stood out before his mind, with blood-curdling vividness. Shuddering, Cecil Beaumont, sunk back into his seat, his arm falling to his side as if struck with palsy.

"Have some wine," said the Tiger, pushing a decanter toward him; and Cecil accepted the invitation, the lip of the decanter clinking on the glass with the tremulousness of his hand, as he poured out the liquor.

CHAPTER VI.

A DARK COMPACT.

A SMILE of triumph curled Tiger Dick's lip as he noted the effect of his words.

"You see, Prince, we can't afford to quarrel," he said.

"Will you come to the point, and tell me what you want of me? State your case and let me go."

Cecil strove hard to appear still master of himself; but the cool sarcasm of the other had cut clear through the armor of bravado in which he had incased himself; and while he still preserved a hollow show of boldness in his words, the tremor in his voice betrayed his weakness.

"Gently, me noble juke," expostulated the Tiger, coolly. "You have told me nothing of yourself. Do you know, I am burning with curiosity to learn what has happened to you since last we met—say, after that little game of hide-and-seek in New York."

"What is my life to you? If you look to me for money, you will find yourself sucking a dry lemon."

"Money! Now, Prince, you know I scorn the sordid pelf. Believe me, my interest in you is purely unselfish."

"I don't question your disinterestedness; but what do you want?"

"But, me lord, why so precipitate? It is true that, now that we are restored to each other, we may be of mutual benefit."

"Well, pitch your trump. Of what benefit can I be to you?"

"Softly! You know we must make our game somewhat according to the run of the cards. As yet, I know nothing of your present circumstances—only that you are cashier of a bank."

"That has nothing to do with the case in hand."

"My dear Prince, every thing! The whole game depends on what's trumps, you know. You have a salary—may I ask its amount?"

"Curse you! what has that to do with the case? I suppose it is the gauge by which you purpose to bleed me."

"Me noble juke, when will you disabuse your mind of that prejudice? Indeed, you wound me sorely by imputing such unworthy motives. It is only my friendly interest in your prosperity, I assure you. I know that you will gratify me."

In his bantering tones there was a ring of iron determination.

Grinding his teeth at his helplessness, Cecil replied:

"I draw a salary of two thousand a year; but I warn you that that is no indication of the length of my account."

"My liege, I am grieved to hear you say so. But then you were never very provident, as I remember. In the good old days, you could flip a penny about as quick as any sport I ever set eyes on. But this bank—it is a private concern?"

"It is owned by Harold Carrington and his son-in-law, David Powell."

"Mr. Powell is the president, and this Mr. Carrington the 'silent partner,' or, in other words, the money-man, I presume?"

"That is the case."

"Socially, you go cheek-by-jowl with these nabobs, of course?"

"Why not?" demanded Cecil, with a frown.

"Why not? To be sure?" laughed Tiger Dick. "Egad! you were always a gentleman, me noble juke. And as to any little squeamishness touching how one comes by one's money, demmy if the pastebords ain't as respectable as bulling and bearing on Wall street, and cornering grain in Chicago! I'll lay my pile on you, for as fine a gent as they turn out of the shops!"

Tiger Dick gazed with unfeigned admiration on his companion. Cecil frowned with impatience.

"Well, what do you make of all this?" he demanded.

"Me noble juke!" cried the Tiger, enthusiastically, passing over Cecil's words. "More than half a dozen years ago I had an inspiration. I saw that you were a genius, and made very cordial overtures, as you will remember, to the effect that we should cast our fortunes together. You were blind, Prince, and didn't see it. Your rash hand overthrew the whole scheme. I forgive you—egad, I do; for it was well played, and came devilishly near being a ten-strike!"—and the Tiger ran his fingers through his hair until they touched the livid scar on the side of his head—"but it was a mistake, Prince, a mistake, by Jove! for we could have made our fortunes—two such lights as you and I. But perhaps you thought that after raking the board, you could play it alone?" he added, smiling.

To one conversant with the circumstances, his humor was ghastly. Cecil shuddered.

"Stow all that," he said, and return to the present, and to business. What am I here for?"

"All in good time, me noble juke; but a little more about yourself, if you please. May I ask who was the young lady I saw in your company this afternoon?"

"What do you want to drag her in for?" demanded Cecil, angrily.

"I know that Sunday-school people would call it a sacrilege, that the name of a pure young woman should be on the lips of such fellows as you and I!"—his words were pointed by a momentary flash of the eye, that struggled with a sneer—"but"—and the old bantering tone returned—"you know me as a man of taste; and, really, she is a prize for a prince."

"Did you summon me here to discuss the personal appearance of women? If so, you are welcome to any opinion you choose to entertain, and we can end this meeting without further words."

"Your hot temper, Prince—your old impetuosity! How such things cling to a fellow. You haven't told me who she is."

"Will it do you any good to know that she is Mr. Powell's daughter?"

"His only one?"

"Yes."

"And called—"

"May, curse you!"

"Really, Prince, your humor is sadly choleric, this evening."

"Go on with your catechism, and don't stop to comment, if you please."

"To be sure, there are what might be considered extenuating circumstances—something to interrupt the unfrilled current," persisted the Tiger, as smilingly as ever; but Cecil, writhing beneath his cool insolence, cut him short.

"Is there anything more that you want to know?"

"Patience, my lord, patience! Let me see—her name is May Powell; she is daughter of a wealthy banker, and granddaughter of another old money-bags in his dotage. My dear Prince, your relations with this charming creature!—are they confidential?"

"This is folly! Of what importance to you are my relations with Miss Powell?"

"Of what importance to me! Not the slightest in the world—only as your friend—as one deeply interested in your welfare, you know. But to you, everything. Whatever your shortcomings, you never incurred even the suspicion of obtuseness, where money was concerned. It will be needless for me to point out her attractions. My soul, a father with one hand all the time in the till, and a grandfather a Cressus, and in years! Come, come, you have not shut your eyes to this. Tell me that she is your friend."

"I am on terms of intimacy with her, if that is any gratification to you."

"That is a beginning. But, of course, you have fallen madly in love with her—her eyes, her hair, her form! The devil one might easily fall in love with a scare-crow, if it were made of gold. But she—she is an angel with a form like a fairy, eyes that shame the blue of heaven, and hair as yellow as her grandfather's guineas. You have told her of this passion—this upheaval of your whole nature—this master-chord that sways your existence?"

"Yes!" growled Cecil, since there was no help for it.

"And she—ah! with the Prince at her feet, what woman could say no? Kenol! you're not an ogre, by any means. Those hands—they were always genteel, and—"

"Deal on!" cried Cecil, impatiently. "Ask for what you want. Don't volunteer information. Your opinions are indifferent to me."

"My Prince, how ungracious! But let it pass. She could not find it in her heart to say you nay. She gave her virgin affections into your keeping. She made you the arbiter of her fate. Is it not so?"

"The engaged herself to me."

"Prince, I congratulate you. The gods were always good to you. When you lay on the red, red it is. Again, I congratulate you."

"Stow your congratulations and drive ahead. Let's have an end to this."

"You have the parents' blessing and the Godspeed of kind friends and neighbors? Why need I ask? I saw her hand upon your arm. You are happy in your love. When is the auspicious occasion—the red-letter day of your conjugal calendar?"

"No day has been set."

"Eh? Who is at fault? Not the lady, I'll be sworn. The father?—ah, those fathers! What said the grim parent, when you urged the matter?"

"Nothing. I have never urged it."

"What, sirrah! Show your hand, pard. What are you holding back?"

In his surprise, Tiger Dick dropped his air of irony, and returned to his natural manner, along with his slang.

"My father knows nothing about our engagement," said Cecil, in desperation.

"The devil!"

Tiger Dick stared across the table, utterly bewildered. Cecil sat frowning, evidently with no intention of coming to his relief.

"May I venture to ask why her parent is left in the dark?" said the Tiger.

"You may venture to do whatever you think fit," replied Cecil, quietly, with a resolute setting of the lips.

There was something in his manner that warned the Tiger that he had gone as far in this direction as he could. Dick was a diplomat, and knew better than to lose his power, by coming to a dead-lock in anything. He shrugged his shoulders indifferently.

"Put it in another form," he said; "I don't stick for any particular trump. Do you have any idea that the governor would sour on your little game, if you put in your bid for the calico?"

"I have no reason to think that he would oppose our marriage."

"That's satisfactory. As for your private reasons, they are neither here nor there; they won't influence the game. A whim, a fancy, what you will. But answer me this—if you choose to marry this girl six months hence, can you do it?"

"I see nothing in the way of it."

"And she is heir to her grandfather's stamps?"

"Together with her brother."

"Hey! her brother?"

"She has a brother."

"Only one?"

"Only one."

"And how old?"

"Twenty-two or three."

"Powell—Powell! Is this the cad?"

Tiger Dick drew a crumpled card from his pocket. The center of his straight brows was drawn down until they formed an obtuse angle, and his thin nostrils quivered with suppressed feeling.

"That is his name," replied Cecil, wondering at the agitation of the Tiger.

"And this fellow is to share the fortune with the future Mrs. Beaumont. By the way, about how much may it be?"

"Say two hundred and fifty thousand."

Cecil's eyes glistened, and his tone became more confidential, as he discussed old Mr. Carrington's accumulations.

Tiger Dick leaned across the table and spoke in a low, concentrated voice.

"I say, pard, have you any particular love for this kid?"

A look of hatred darkened Cecil's brow. It did not pass unnoticed by the Tiger. He spoke still lower, and his eyes read Cecil Beaumont's soul.

"Pard, we want that money, and we're going to have it! This bantam must stand aside!"

It was as if a flame had darted from his eyes and pierced Cecil to the heart. He started back, with a shudder and a thrill that blanched his cheeks.

The Tiger shrugged his shoulders and laughed lightly.

"Oh, not that way," he said. "It won't do in this part of the country, only as a last resort. We'll try fair means first; but we must have the money!"

Tiger Dick thought a moment, and then looking up, said:

"Of what stamp is this fellow? Is he anything of a sport?"

"He is about like other young fellows of his position in society."

"Drinks?"

"Moderately."

"A fool. Does he ever play any?"

"Not that I ever knew of."

"Plays billiards and bets at horse-races, of course."

"I know an instance of his having won a bet."

"Co-rect! That's the first hand."

Again Tiger Dick meditated. Presently he spoke.

"I met him in a buggy, with a young girl with long black hair and black eyes—a very queen. Who is she?"

"I recognize no particular person by your description," said Cecil; but his words were belied by a wave of passion that shook his frame and drove the color from his lips.

Tiger Dick's eyes read his face.

"Aha!" he thought, "here's a gay young bantam secretly engaged to a fair damsel. Without any apparent reason, he scowls like a pirate at the mention of her brother's name; and then goes green in the face over the unrecognized description of some other Dulcinea seen in the brother's company."

Tiger Dick's face did not reveal the discovery; but he put this and that together, and arrived very nearly at the truth.

"Is he engaged to any one?" pursued the Tiger. "We must know all the cards in the enemies' hand, to play a sure game."

"Not that I know of," replied Cecil, in a choking voice.

"You transparent idiot!" thought the Tiger; but he said:

"Look-a-here, pard, how does our fledgeling get his beer-money?"

"He has a salary of a thousand a year, as clerk in the bank."

"Pugh! That don't keep him in shoe-strings."

"I suppose he contracts debts, like others of his class."

"And trusts to luck and the governor's good-nature to pay them. I say, pard, when these young bucks begin to devote their stamps to charitable purposes—trying to pare the claws of the tiger for instance—they get mighty desperate, sometimes."

"Well?"

"Billy Saunderson must make the acquaintance of this infant, and show him the sights. He, in his innocence, cries conclusions with Tiger Dick, which is step one. 'Give a dog a bad name, you know.'"

"Yes. Well?"

"Pard, do you shove as nasty a quill as you used to, in the good old days?"

"I write as well as ever," replied Cecil, beginning to see the drift of the other's plan.

"One question more. What kind of an old gent is this grandfather? Does he go in heavy on honesty being the best policy, and all that sort of thing?"

"He is unusually rigid in his notions of strict integrity."

"I thought so. They are all that way, after they get so old that they can't steal any more themselves. I suppose, now, he'd throw overboard a fellow that, at a time of momentary forgetfulness, should sign somebody else's name, instead of his own, to a little paper with dollars and cents on it?"

"He would cast off his own son for such an act."

"Or, better still, his grandson?"

"Or, his grandson."

"Well, let me prophesy a little bit—I sometimes indulge in that sort of thing. A certain Tiger, going in for bad company."

In due time a Chicago bank pays a draft for say five hundred, purporting to be drawn by Messrs. Powell & Co., bankers, 'which the same' they never drew. Evidence of having imitated the signature of Powell & Co. is found in Mr. Fred's desk. His associations are ventilated. What so likely as that he should get hard up, and raise the wind somewhat irregularly? As it is all in the family, of course no exposure takes place; but he is sent away for his health. Grandpa is outraged and changes his will. The cashier weds the object of his devotion. At the death of the aged progenitor, your humble servant pockets a hundred thousand, or such a matter, and waltzes off to Europe, while the sorrowing grandson follows the bent of his peculiar genius with the rest. Do you think such a prophecy is at all likely to come true?"

Tiger Dick leaned across the table and extended his hand.

"Pard," he said, "put it there! Will you chip into this pool?"

Cecil hesitated.

"It's a pity to break the heart of that little angel with the black hair and eyes, if she has got her pile on that particular jack; but every one must play his own hand in this here little game, eh, pard?"

The Tiger spoke with his piercing eyes on Cecil's face. At mention of the black hair and eyes, Cecil flushed, then paled, and setting his teeth hard, grasped the Tiger's hand.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 271.)

CHAPTER XXI—CONTINUED.

THE THORNHURST MYSTERY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE FALSE WIDOW," "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CORAL AND RUBY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI—CONTINUED.

The lawyer crossed briskly to the spot where Nora sat, her head resting against her chair, her face in shadow, her hands locked in her lap, motionless as a statue through all the reading except once when a shudder passed over her when her own name was mentioned first. She had been as still, as undemonstrative ever since the verdict of the coroner's jury had been rendered. The sight of her kind old friend as he lay in his coffin had not moved her. Great as her own desolation and grief might be there was an ever-present horror before her so infinitely greater than all else was swallowed up beside it. All the occurrences passing about her had seemed unreal. She had strained her attention to comprehend the meaning of the will, hoping for some expression of forgiveness and assurance of paternal affection which might, yet comfort Vane, and instead came the knowledge that struck her like a curse. She was the one to usurp his inheritance; through her he had become a wanderer upon the earth, an outcast from his home, worse than all that a man hunted by his fellow-man. But for her Colonel Vivian would have forgiven him seven times seventy times if need have been. Out of darkness closing around that thought glared at her as though written there in letters of fire.

"Great heavens!" cried the lawyer, stooping over her. "Air here! The young lady has fainted. Such is the result of great and unexpected good fortune."

A window was thrown wide. The rough winter breeze swept chillingly through the room. Nora had not fainted, but she lay back in her chair in a deathlike stupor from which no ordinary method would revive her. The great shock of Colonel Vivian's murder, followed by Vane's accusation of the crime, working upon her these last three days had received a final touch through the accession to this fortune, which those about were envying her.

Before night she was in a delirium of brain fever, which brought the gravest of looks into the face of the physician called to attend her.

Sir Rupert Archer remained in the village. The steamer in which Vane's passage was taken had left on the third, but Vane had not gone in her. Detectives had been on the watch at the depots and about the docks. His town lodgings had been kept under constant surveillance, half a dozen different clues had been taken up and followed, but all ended alike in nothing. At the end of a week the authorities began to consider the case in hand one of extraordinary difficulty, and a few whose sympathies were at first enlisted for the young man took this successful elusion of the law as an evidence of more hardened villainy, more deeply-plotted criminality than they had first supposed. Among his whole circle of acquaintances but one stood for him openly and unwaveringly, Sir Rupert Archer.

Nora was lying at the very gates of death. It was weeks before any change for the bet-

ter took place, weeks of anxiety and watching, during which Thornhurst was gloomy and silent as a tomb; but young, strong vitality conquered at last. It was March before she was about the house again, the thin, pallid ghost of her former self, all her wealth of warm hair gone, and in its place little rings of softest brown curling about temples and forehead where the blue veins showed through the transparent skin.

April with its tears and smiles, its clouds and sunshine came. By the middle of the month Nora went to the little brown cottage, on the Cape Cod coast, to the two faithful old people, who, separated as they were from her, had more

camp had sprung up without their limits. A crowd of two or three hundred men surged continually about the mouth of what was known as the old mine. Miners left their own claims and work to watch enviously the rich yields which one particular streak of gravel in the old mine was turning out. Others fell to work with renewed encouragement to sink their own pits deeper, and a steady flow of new-comers kept appearing until now there were no more claims to be taken.

"Hurrah!" shouted a voice. "Hurrah! another strike in the old drift."

In two minutes the whole space about was one surging mass of humanity. A whooping crowd, vociferous in their demands to "wet the find," and when the shout went through that it was a hundred and fifty carat diamond of the first water, men seemed to go fairly mad with excitement. It was the largest gem discovered there, and the fortunate finder stood flushed and triumphant with that fortune in a drop upon his palm, a great drop of dazzling brilliance, every motion throwing out quivering rays and flashes of burning light.

"Come, Smith," said his partner, touching him upon the shoulder, "liquor the crowd and let's get out of this Babel. I never was nervous over good fortune before, but I confess to being shaky now."

The fortunate finder was caught up on the shoulders of the crowd, to his own great discomfort, and borne triumphantly through the wide, main street. He was not to make his escape easily; even when he had been able to clear the vociferous throng through the time-honored custom of "wetting the find," some eager speculators hemmed him in.

"Say, now, what'll you take for the hull section, Mister Smith?"

"Give you twenty dollars a foot for it."

"Double that in hard cash!"

"Fifty dollars a foot for ten square yards and my own choice. Come now, you'll not do better than that in ten years."

"Can't he, though, I got five hundred dollars better on the offer and my own choice."

"Gentlemen," said the lucky miner, decisively, "I can make no bargain without the approval and concurrence of my partner. Come along; make your offers to him; give us a little time to think the matter over, and we may strike a bargain. What do you say?"

They agreed, since there was nothing else to be done, grumbling a little at the prospect of a night's delay, advancing their bids to startling figures in their eagerness to become possessed of this inestimable mine of wealth.

The two partners consulted together aside, and the elder man announced their decision.

"We'll sell out the half-section, Smith and I, for what you've offered, a hundred thousand apiece. The other half isn't for sale just now. We're not anxious, but we're perfectly willing, so let's know of what mind you are."

So eager were they that the bargain was concluded on the spot. Papers were drawn up and signed before night, and it is a question which were envied most, the new owners of the half-interest, or the old ones who would realize double the amount of the sale upon diamonds already in their possession.

The sun went down upon the boisterous scene. Long shadows crept in. Groups of miners gathered before the tents or strolled aimlessly about the wide street, discussing the absorbing topic of the day. Further out upon the plain the negroes had congregated and were executing to a monotonous chant some fantastic native dance. A short distance aside from the regular lines stood one large tent, and just without the opening, smoking their pipes and watching the great, round white moon come up, were the two comrades who were the pioneers of the movement here.

"We've cut lines for good and all it seems, partner," said the elder man at last. "We've been together high upon two years now, and each has kept an uncommonly close mouth about his own affairs as I look back on it. I haven't been much given to talking of myself, and for no better reason than I would have found little or nothing to say. I have always been a stiff blade, though I come of good family, still and starched old Puritans, who trace back to the first colonists of Boston, and from that direct to the Mayflower for all I ever knew or cared. There isn't one other in the world to-day so close to me as you are, my lad. I took you to be a gentleman, you remember; I knew you to be a gentleman, though you never made any pretensions on that score; and have proved yourself as tough and plucky as the rough lot out there. You, I take it, are going back to your proper place in the world, and I'm off on a voyage to the States that's been like a prick to my conscience these last weeks here, knowing I'd ought to take it. Before you mind giving me a back view before we cut quite apart, my boy?"

The other, a tall, finely-developed young man of twenty-six or seven, dark-haired and bronzed, looked away through the summer night, made vocal with insect notes, and with something between a sigh and a smile, knocked the ashes from his pipe and turned toward his companion.

"It's not a pleasant view for me to look back upon, Prescott," he said. "It's little enough good I can tell you of myself before we struck hands and fellowship. I had been six months in the mines then, and without one single stroke of good-fortune to encourage me. I owe all I have had since to the chance you gave me, and if you care to hear my story, it is little enough return for me to tell it. In the first place, then, my name is not Smith."

"Always knew that," said Prescott, quietly. "I didn't chime with the cut of your jaw."

"My own name is Vivian. I hinted that I was Vivian. You have heard of the road to ruin, I suppose? Well, I went over that road at a full gallop for the first good years. I wound up as young men of that stamp always do, wind up, sooner or later, at a bad crisis. I had a noble old father whom I brought to sorrow by my bad course. He paid my debts up to the last, though his justifiable anger led him to openly avow his intention of disinheriting me; you will admit that I well merited it when I tell you I had raised money on a post-obit, and that he discovered the fact. His generosity through all touched me to the bottom of whatever good was in my heart. I made a resolve to bring myself up to a standard of which he need not be ashamed. I made an arrangement to leave the States; to go to London my original intention was. I went down to the old place to beg my father's forgiveness and ask his blessing. I came away without either, so bitterly was he incensed. I had worn his patience out long before, and it is little wonder he had no faith in me."

"I left his home that night—it was New Year's Eve—as desolate a man as might well be found on earth. Through a blunder brought about by my own inattention, I took the wrong train at the first change. Instead of going direct for New York I was en route for Harrisburg, and before I had discovered my mistake I had heard a conversation between two passengers ahead, which quite altered my whole future course."

"The two men had taken passage for South America, by a ship which would sail from Baltimore on the following day, their destination the mines of Brazil. One of them had repented, however, and all the eloquence of his companion was ineffectual to move him."

"There's no use of your talking," I heard him say. "I can ill afford to lose the passage-money, but I wouldn't take the risk of a round trip or a month's stay in that bilious climate for twice as much. I'd die of yellow fever there, within six months. I tell you for the last, I'll not go."

"I leaned forward and touched his shoulder, calling the attention of both."

"Will you sell your chance? I asked. 'I'll go in your place and refund your passage-money.'

"He very readily made the bargain. The other looked at me sharply and asked some questions, but seemed satisfied with the arrangement. To save trouble and explanations, which there was now no time to make, I assumed his name and personality for the voyage. I had meant from the first to take an assumed name, and I never changed it after reaching the Brazilian coast."

"I am going back with money enough to repay all that I squandered in my reckless days, and something over. Better than that, I go back to prove myself not entirely unworthy to be my father's son. That's all, Prescott; no hopeful relation, as I warned you at first."

"Hopeful for the future, my dear fellow. You asked me, when I made out those papers, a few hours ago, why I didn't sell out the whole section and live at ease for the rest of my life. I put you off with an evasive answer then. The true reason is because I have no more right to that other half-section than you have. I was one of the original company you know. Half the shares were owned by one man; I struck up an acquaintance with him, just before he died, about five years ago. He gave his papers concerning the mine into my keeping; they weren't considered worth the ink upon them at that time, but he asked me, if they ever amounted to anything, to see that the proceeds of his share went to his daughter. I've got her address along with the documents, and I've had the matter of the voyage I've decided on in my mind since we struck our good luck here. I'm going to offer her a fair price, considering all the risks, for that other half, and I'll come back and work it myself, or sell, according to my fancy then. I've thought of the matter nights until I couldn't be content to put it off. I couldn't rest easy with this much money in my hands, and think that Ned Carteret's daughter might be starving for all I know."

"Who?" the young man asked, in startled, intense voice.

"Carteret. Little Lenore, he called the girl."

"Nora? Why, Prescott, Nora Carteret is my father's ward!"

The two looked into each other's faces in the bright moonlight for one moment; then their hands came together in congratulatory pressure.

"This is better than I could have hoped," Prescott said, warmly. "We'll not of necessity cut asunder yet awhile; we'll take our home journey together."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 262.)

Overland Kit: OR, THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "WOLF
DEMON," "WHITE WITCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.
GREEK MEETS GREEK.

TEN o'clock on the morning following the examination, found the mining-camp known as Spur City in a terrible state of excitement. As one old gray-haired miner remarked, "He hadn't seen such a heap of people in town since the day when the first woman and baby arrived from the East." An event, the knowledge of which traveled with railroad speed from camp to camp in the mountain gullies, and which brought every miner within thirty miles into town, to see the sight. And, as the husband of the woman and the father of the baby happened to be a shrewd West Virginian, he instantly "went in" to accumulate a small fortune by charging a "bit" apiece for admittance to the tent where his family resided! The unfortunate arrival of two other women and two other babies, some three days after the first, "busted" the speculation. The miners were like all other people who run after curiosities. They didn't care to see sights which had become common.

The old miner who uttered the above-quoted remark regarding the number of people in town, was reputed to be one of the oldest inhabitants. He had been in Spur City full three years, and had seen the camp grow up from one tent to some fifty tents and shanties combined. Of course, his words had weight. Speculation was on tiptoe regarding the chances of Injun Dick's acquittal or conviction. The state of the betting, perhaps, indicated how the popular pulse of Spur City beat in regard to the matter, better than any thing else: Four to one that Dick was acquitted went begging; few cared to risk their money that he would be convicted, even at that odds.

One loud-talking gentleman shook his canvas bag of gold-dust freely in the air, and offered to bet four to one that Talbot would be acquitted, and followed it with a side-bet that he could flax out Judge Jones and the witness, Joe Rain, inside of a quarter of an hour single-handed, or any two men on the jury.

It is hardly necessary to remark that this reckless better was the man-from-Red-Dog. None cared to accept his offer, though.

As a general rule, the miners scouted the idea that Injun Dick could, by any possibility, be the road-agent, Overland Kit.

Judge Jones, urged onward by the fierce passion that was burning in his heart, had been up by daybreak, and since that time, he had not let the grass grow under his feet.

He had dispatched two different parties in various directions. On what mission they went, no one knew except Judge Jones and the leaders of the expeditions. With one of the parties went, under guard, the valuable witness, Joe Rain.

After various consultations with the leading citizens, Judge Jones selected twelve men for the jury, and presented them for the assembled people to pass judgment upon.

As the twelve comprised twelve of the principal men in the mining-camp, they were elected unanimously. So the jury was formed.

A little circumstance that had occurred early in the morning had annoyed Judge Jones ex-

cessively. Just after the departure of the second expedition, the Judge was waited upon by the New Yorker, Salmon Rennet, accompanied by Dandy Jim, Ginger Bill—who had been relieved of his sentry-post at daybreak—and a couple of other citizens, friends of Talbot.

Rennet had introduced himself as a member of the New York bar, and informed the Judge that he had accepted the position of counsel to the prisoner.

The Judge ground his teeth in anger, when informed of the fact, but replied civilly enough.

Rennet desired to know the hour set for the trial, and when the Judge said "ten o'clock," he objected, until he could have an interview with the prisoner and ascertain something regarding the line of defense to be used. As the old lawyer explained, he had not yet seen his client in person—a fact which the Judge was fully aware of, as he had given express orders that Talbot should not be allowed to see any one.

With an ill grace, the Judge allowed the lawyer admission to the shanty where Dick was confined.

After a very short interview, not occupying more than ten minutes, Mr. Rennet waited again upon the Judge, and assured him that the prisoner would not be ready for trial until six o'clock that evening, at the earliest, as he—Rennet—would need all that time to procure certain important witnesses and prepare for the trial.

The Judge replied tersely, and with considerable asperity in his manner, that the trial was fixed for ten o'clock, and at ten o'clock it would take place whether the prisoner was ready or not.

Then Rennet blandly moved to "amend the motion," by proposing that the prisoner be hanged at ten o'clock, without any trial at all, and he added: "As it was plainly evident that the presiding Judge had made up his mind to hang the prisoner anyway, they might as well hang him without a trial as with one."

After this shot, the old lawyer withdrew. About ten minutes afterward a noise in the street attracted the Judge to the door, and, to his disgust, he beheld the old New Yorker elevated on a whisky barrel, his hat in his hand, his white hairs flying in the breeze, supported on one side by the man-from-Red-Dog, and on the other by Ginger Bill, addressing a crowd of miners.

In about five minutes Jones became pretty well convinced that he was no match for the New Yorker.

Old Salmon Rennet, in his young days, had been a prominent ward politician in great Gotham, had won the Judge's esteem with the aid of the "unfettered" voters of "bloody Sixth," and, besides, he was really an able lawyer. He knew how to address a mixed audience, and it was really fun for the old warhorse of Tammany once again to mount the stump.

Inside of two minutes he had the crowd in a roar. Then he invited them to come and see the hanging, congratulated them upon having a judge so able that he hung men first, and found out whether they were guilty or not afterward.

The consequence of these few remarks was, that two minutes after the old gentleman descended to terra firma, a deputation of excited citizens, headed by the redoubtable Red-Dog, waited upon Judge Jones, and demanded to know whether he was going to give Injun Dick a show for his life or not?

The Judge attempted to temporize, but that sort of thing wouldn't go down with the crowd that Dandy Jim headed.

"Too thin!" remarked the citizen of Red-Dog, sententiously. The growl that followed Jim's terse expression, from the crowd, had a similar meaning.

Jones reflected. He knew that he was backed by all the more respectable of the citizens; but he also knew that he was powerless to carry the majority of the Spur Cityites with him, unless some overt act was committed to serve as an excuse for a call upon the Vigilantes. If Dick had shot a man down in cold blood, the deed coupled with his well-known mode of living—by playing cards—might have been sufficient to have raised a mob, and strung him up to the first tree that came handy. But, in the present case, until Dick was proved to be the road-agent, Overland Kit, beyond the shadow of a doubt, it would not do to act rashly.

That he could prove that Talbot was the road-agent, Jones had no doubt.

And so Judge Jones was forced by the popular clamor, raised by the speech of the wily old lawyer, to grant what he might readily have yielded with a good grace in the first place.

The trial was fixed to come off at six o'clock that evening.

When it became noised about town that the "old fat cuss, in store clothes," as the miners irreverently termed Mr. Rennet, was a celebrated lawyer from New York, and that he had undertaken the defense of the prisoner, the state of the odds in the betting market changed at once. All those reckless souls who had bet one to four that Talbot would be found guilty, went round with bags of gold-stuff in their hands, and "tears in their eyes" imploring somebody to take their offer of thirty to four that Dick wouldn't be found guilty.

As we before said, no better example of how public sentiment regarded the matter can be given than the statement of the odds offered.

Judge Jones, looking out into the street, could see the old lawyer, surrounded by a group of Talbot's friends, busy as a beaver. Horsemens kept riding up, making reports, and then, apparently, departing on other missions.

Jones groaned in agony. He suspected that the lawyer's services in behalf of the prisoner was a blow dealt him by a woman's hand; but he little guessed that he was fighting two. The rivals, Bernice Gwyne and Eldorado Jimmie, had made common cause against him in behalf of Talbot.

CHAPTER XXIV. THE TRIAL.

As the hour for the trial drew near, the express office was the center of attraction.

It soon became evident to all that the shanty was much too small to hold the Judge, the jury, the prisoner, the witnesses, and the lawyers, to say nothing of the people.

After considerable discussion, an adjournment to the open air was suggested. This was soon adopted unanimously, and gave general satisfaction. The citizens of Spur City, and the neighbors who had been attracted from the surrounding camps by the news of the trial—it is astonishing how news of this sort will travel, and how fast it goes—naturally objected to being deprived of a chance to see the show.

So the court, which was to try Dick Talbot,

better known as Injun Dick, and find out whether he was Overland Kit or not, assembled in the open air.

A table was placed for the Judge, the jury were accommodated on two pine benches. A dry-goods box (the only one, by the way, in Spur City, which had been freely contributed by its public-spirited owner, when he had learned that it was needed, for as he expressed it, he "wouldn't hev had the fun stopped for any o'ery old box, nohow,") served for the prisoner, the top and one side knocked out. A barrel, with a board nailed to one end, and set upright, was for the witnesses. The Testament had been put in charge of a careful, reliable man, as it had been discovered, after a thorough search, that it was the only one in Spur City. Now it was laid on the board, and the person in charge stood near by to see that no one handled it, for even the rough miners, with all their lawless ways, had a profound respect for the "Word," which has come down to us intact through so many long years.

The Judge took his seat, the jury theirs. The prisoner was placed in the box, the guards encompassing him to prevent all chance of escape. By the side of Talbot sat the old lawyer, a confident smile upon his face. A knot of witnesses, who had been summoned, were on the other side, clustered together by the side of the impromptu witness-box. Seated in a chair, by the side of the old lawyer, was Bernice Gwyne, who had been summoned as a witness.

The sun had gone down behind the far western peaks, but the clouds were tinged gold, purple and crimson by his dying rays.

The balsamic odor of the pines swept down along the valley, borne on the bosom of the gentle breeze. The Reese, a sheet of flame-colored satin, from the reflection of the gorgeous clouds above, rippled on over rock and ledge and golden-hued sands, a realization of the fabled river "Eldorado," of the Spaniard, as if a human being's life was not in peril, ten paces from its banks.

Judge Jones opened the court.

"As I cannot find any citizen willing to act as prosecuting attorney, I shall be obliged to question the witnesses against the prisoner myself; but the prisoner at the bar may rest assured that I desire to extract nothing but the truth, and that he shall have full justice done him."

Talbot bowed, but replied not, while old Rennet smiled serenely to himself.

The first witness was Bernice Gwyne.

She related simply that the outlaw had entered her room, engaged her in conversation for a few moments, then came the attack upon him and his flight. The subject of the conversation was not touched upon, further than that Overland Kit had declared himself to be her cousin, Patrick Gwyne, and had warned her to leave Spur City.

At the end of her recital, Judge Jones spoke. "Do you detect any resemblance between the person of the prisoner at the bar and the outlaw?"

"None at all," Bernice replied, firmly.

"Do you detect any resemblance between the prisoner at the bar and your cousin, Patrick Gwyne?" the Judge asked.

"I object to that question!" cried the old lawyer, on his feet in a moment—one of the miners had kindly provided him with a keg to sit on.

"Why do you object?" asked Jones, knitting his brows.

"The question is irrelevant."

"It is not!" cried the Judge.

"What is its purpose?"

"To establish the fact that the prisoner at the bar is Patrick Gwyne."

"Exactly; but if the court knows itself, the prisoner is not accused of being Patrick Gwyne, but of being Overland Kit."

"Certainly; we allow that; we may not be proceeding according to the exact forms of law, but we are after justice. If I can prove that the prisoner is Patrick Gwyne, and that Overland Kit is Patrick Gwyne also, it is clear to my mind that we establish the prisoner's identity as Overland Kit."

"Let me answer the question, please," said Bernice, suddenly.

The old lawyer took the hint at once, and sat down.

A smile of triumph appeared in the eyes of the Judge.

"Let me put the question again, Miss, so that the jury will understand it fully," and the Judge looked at the gentlemen of the jury meaningly, as much as to say, "Take notice, now."

"Do you detect any resemblance between the prisoner and your cousin, Patrick Gwyne, who came to you disguised as Overland Kit?" said the Judge, slowly, measuring out, as it were, every word.

"Well, bless my soul!" muttered the old lawyer, in an undertone, "if that isn't a nice way to put a question—and he wants nothing but justice! When!"

Bernice fixed her eyes fully upon Talbot. The crowd held their breath to listen.

"I have not seen my cousin, Patrick Gwyne, for ten years, but, in the face of that gentleman, I do not trace a single resemblance to him."

The old lawyer chuckled; the Judge had got rather more than he bargained for.

Jones bit his lip nervously, hesitated for a moment, then he spoke again:

"Of course, ten years naturally would make a great change in a man."

"That's for the jury," muttered Rennet; "and he wants justice!"

"I am through with the witness." Then the Judge sat down.

Rennet got up.

"Relate when and where you first saw this Overland Kit," he said.

Bernice told the story of the road-agent stopping the coach.

"When and where did you first see the prisoner at the bar?"

"At the Eldorado Hotel when I arrived here. He was in the saloon when I entered."

"You came straight from the place where the coach was attacked to the hotel?"

"Yes."

"Coach go fast or slow?"

"Very fast."

"How far from here do you suppose the place was where the coach was stopped by the road-agent?"

"Some ten miles, I should think."

"Geyser Canyon, eight miles," said Ginger Bill, from the crowd.

"Thank you; the information about the distance and the name of the canyon is not, of course, given under oath, gentlemen of the jury; but it is hardly necessary to speak of that; it is a mere question of distance and of locality. Probably, nearly all of you are aware of the truth, or falsehood, of the remark. All that I want to call your attention to, is the fact that, on the night in question, the coach was stopped some eight or ten miles from this place, by this Overland Kit, the man's person sworn to by this lady; yet, when she entered the Eldorado saloon an hour or so later, having

come directly from the scene of the robbery, at the topmost speed of the coach, the first person she saw, when she entered the Eldorado, was the prisoner at the bar. When you remember, gentlemen of the jury, that the outlaw was chased into the mountain passes by the United States troops, and that the coach came directly on to the hotel here, you will clearly see the impossibility of the prisoner at the bar being the road-agent, Overland Kit; unless, indeed, he possesses the marvelous faculty of being in two places, some eight or ten miles apart, at the same time. In fact, a clearer *alibi* than this, I don't think that I have ever seen proven in the whole course of my professional experience." Then Rennet sat down.

It did not require the wisdom of a Solomon to see that Talbot's case was won already, unless some strong evidence against him, against which there could be no caviling, could be introduced.

Ginger Bill, the driver, was called to the stand; he confirmed Bernice's statement regarding the appearance of Kit on the road, and finding Talbot in the saloon; also the distance and the locality of the robbery. Then, in answer to the Judge's questions, he gave an account of his share in the attempt to capture the outlaw in the hotel; the running fight up the street; and the arrest of Dick, while playing poker in the Cosmopolitan Hotel, in Gopher Gully.

Rennet only asked Bill three questions.

"What time did the affair in the hotel take place?"

"Bout eight o'clock; maybe half-past."

"After the fight, did you go directly to the Gully to arrest the prisoner?"

"Yes."

"What time did you get there?"

"All along from nine to half-past; it takes 'bout an hour to walk it."

"You see, gentlemen of the jury, that Overland Kit was in Spur City, engaged in an armed contest with the citizens, at eight or half-past eight. That fact is clearly proven by the testimony of this witness; an hour or so later, he arrested the prisoner at the bar, in Gopher Gully, four miles off. This is important, because we have a witness ready to prove that the prisoner entered the Cosmopolitan Hotel, in Gopher Gully, at eight o'clock precisely, the very time when—if he is Overland Kit—he was fighting the citizens in Spur City."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 264.)



The Letter-Box.

GUS-COMMONTRE (Mott Haven) asks:

"What will remove freckles and tan from the face without injury to the skin?"

There is a very finely-prepared liquid glycerine, sold in large bottles by the druggists, called "pearl white glycerine," that improves the face without injuring the skin, if you use it faithfully, following the directions accompanying. Equal parts of rose-water and glycerine, mixed, and rubbed upon the face before retiring and washed off in the morning, is excellent for sunburn, tan and freckles. A trifle of powdered talc applied night and morning to freckles, with a linen rag moistened in glycerine, removes them.

CASTORIA. Topazes, amethysts, onyxes and carnelians are the stones mostly worn by gentlemen. A topaz is a brilliant, translucent, yellow stone, an amethyst purple or violet; upon the surface of either of these gems may be cut some design, or the initial of the wearer, or it may be put in with gold or chip diamonds. Onyx presents a surface pink, gray, black or white, is in layers of varied colors, and is easily carved. Agate or onyx carved to show the band or design in relief is a cameo; and the handsomest of gentlemen's rings, but easily injured. Gentlemen wear a ring upon the third, or the little finger.

HARVEY G. A. (St. Louis) writes:

"Will you give me a few hints concerning office etiquette? If a gentleman enters an office should he take a seat while the person he is waiting upon remains standing? When a gentleman rises should his visitor consider it a hint to depart? Suppose you call upon a party and are told to wait until they come in, and know that they are in at the time, what can you do? Do gentlemen remove their hats upon entering an office?"

If you receive no invitation, by word or act, to sit, you should not do so—especially while the proprietor remains standing. A visitor should consider his conference ended when his host rises. Gentlemen should endeavor to transact their business with dispatch, and not encroach upon a man's time in hours devoted to his work. If you know a person to be in, when you are led to believe them, you can readily infer that they do not wish to see you, and you had better put your errand upon paper and leave it, if it can be dispatched in that manner. Very frequently gentlemen enter each other's offices without removing their hats, but it is not polite to neglect this little act of courtesy. A true gentleman will be courteous in every place and under all circumstances.

MARCOVERRY (Flushing).

The latest agony "concerning weddings is the revival of the old-fashioned wedding cake boxes. Only one kind of cake is inclosed, that the bride's cake, which is not served to guests at the luncheon but divided into tiny pieces and tied up in small white boxes. A box is handed to each departing guest. Bridesmaids are often dispensed with now, and only ushers appear at the most stylish weddings. When bridesmaids are selected they should be youthful and dressed much like the bride, only their costume may be more elaborately and gayly trimmed.

HALLIE MONTROSS (Auburn) writes:

"If a young lady is being escorted home by a gentleman who does not offer his arm to her, may she ask him to do so? When a gentleman does offer his arm is it optional with a lady to refuse? Do ladies ever take a gentleman's arm in the day?"

A gentleman so remiss as not to offer his arm to the lady he is escorting may certainly be reminded of his duty by the lady. She might pleasantly say, "With your permission I will avail myself of your arm, Mr. S., or, 'Mr. S., may I trouble you to let me take your arm?' It is optional with a lady to refuse a gentleman's arm, but under most circumstances such a refusal would appear rude; though there might be cases where she could gracefully decline. Ladies frequently take a gentleman's arm during the day upon a public promenade, or Sunday; but we are such a brusque and always-in-a-hurry nation, that under other circumstances our gentlemen never seem to think of such attentions.

KATE JOHNSON (Reading, Penn.).

A girl of fifteen is too young to think of marriage or even of "lovers. At your age you should be devoting your mind entirely to your studies, or to the mastery of some trade or art by which you can become a capable, independent, good-for-something woman."

"Ed" (Philadelphia).

If the gentleman and lady were "dear friends" there was no impropriety in her sending her "remembrance of flowers" to decorate his coffin, because he was an "engaged man" and she was but "slightly acquainted with any of his friends." They knew that she had known him intimately for years, and should have accepted her "beautiful gift" with gratitude that he was so kindly remembered. It is customary now, in many places, to annually decorate the graves of friends upon the anniversary of their death. Acquaintances outside of the circle of relatives often add their tributes, and it is a pretty way of showing friendship for a family.

RENECCA VINCE (Port Washington).

It is scarcely safe to give you advice. If you wrote the gentleman a note and he never acknowledged it, you certainly are correct in regarding it a breach of etiquette due you, and may show him you so regard it by failing to recognize him in future, or until he offers an explanation; but are you positive he received your note? If he has heretofore shown himself so gentlemanly and kind of your society, do you not think there may be some explainable cause for his silence?

GERTRUDE WILSON.

Washing your hands several times in elder vinegar will relieve them from the stiffness and roughness induced by long using them in suds.

FRIENDS AND LOVERS.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

We were friends in youth together
Ere we knew life's meaning deep,
And through bright and stormy weather
We could strongest friendship keep.
But as years went on and showered
You with woman's lovely grace,
And with manhood me empowered,
Leaving of our youth no trace,
Then more cold and distant seeming
Than our good and friendly way,
Each grew shy in silent dreaming,
And said less from day to day,
Till at last, like passion bursting,
When a heart its mate discovers,
Each confessed its inward thirsting—
Friendship ripened into love!

One lived only for the other,
Life was sweet and love was kind;
For the hearts need now not smother
Kindred feelings of the mind.
But one day a word was spoken
In an idle, careless way,
And returned was every token
On that fatal, ill-starred day.
Friends no more, and now not lovers,
Wander we in life alone;
And regret alone now covers
Years that to the past have flown.
Love will ever be uncertain,
Friendship not alone can bind us;
So I draw the mystic curtain
O'er the strangers you now find us.

A Quiet Tragedy.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

AN unfolded letter lay in Annie Carleton's hands, and by the way her dark gray eyes were thoughtfully fixed on the uninviting prospect outside the window of the dull, dark room, her mother, watching her anxiously from her couch, knew the girl was deciding the question that had come to be the one great question of her life, of late.

Not that it was an affair of love, or marriage, or any such thing; or even that the letter was from a gentleman, which the fine, cramped hand quickly disproved, as well as the signature, "Sarah Moss," at its close.

But that a much more important point was at issue—that of this proposed means by which Annie might earn her own and her mother's daily bread. There had been an advertisement in the *Herald*, and Annie had seen it in the cheerless apartment where she lived, quite by accident—or Fate, she knew it was, in later days; she had answered it in almost hopelessness that any one would need her services, even in the humble capacity of child's nurse.

But an answer had come, offering her the situation of nursery-maid to a little lame girl, at a salary that would make her own afflicted mother perfectly comfortable.

The name of the little lame child was Edith; the place was an hour's ride from the city, at a grand country residence she had heard of somewhere—"Chiseldale," on the banks of a Jersey river.

"You will go, Annie?"

Her mother's voice startled her from her dreams, and the thoughtful gray eyes met, half wistfully, her mother's.

"Certainly; I would go if it were half as promising. And you shall remove from this miserable place the very day I receive my first quarter's salary."

Mrs. Carleton smiled fondly at the girl, and thought how fair she was, with her clear, thin skin, with the delicate blue veins, and the slight flush of tenderness pink on her cheeks; with her pale-gold hair, and heavy dark gold lashes, and well-arched brows, under which the gray eyes lay like calm, clear wells.

She was a fair, girlish girl, who in eighteen years had seen very much of trouble and poverty and stern discipline of self; who, in all the eighteen years, had never had a lover, or met, with her beautiful eyes, a pair of masculine ones that had even troubled her with the second thought. A gentle, patient, thoughtful girl, utterly forgetful of self, untiring in watchful care of her invalid mother, there could have been selected for the little unknown Edith at Chiseldale no better companion than this Annie Carleton, whose life romance began the hour she applied for the position she received so unexpectedly.

That afternoon she made her few preparations for her departure in the morning; and her mother was unusually cheerful, even gay, as she mended daintily a tiny lace ruffle, or basted fresh linen in the plain, pretty chintz dresses Annie would wear on duty.

"You'll be desponding calico soon, Annie, I expect, and the second quarter you'll be wearing your best dresses for common, I suppose, and having a silk for Sundays."

"I don't care for dress much, you know, mother," was her quiet reply.

"But you will—at such a stylish place as Chiseldale. Why, there'll be no end of company I dare say—gentlemen, too, Annie, rich and handsome. Who knows but that you might have a lover among them, child?"

The pink flush on Annie's face never deepened a tint. And her mother went on:

"Stranger things have happened; and for all you're to be only a child's nurse, Annie, don't you ever forget you're fit for any man."

And so, with this parting advice, Annie Carleton started for Chiseldale—a quiet, half-shy girl, with the face of an angel, so pure, so innocent, so full of expectation.

Her train was crowded, and there was not an empty seat, and she stood a moment in the aisle, looking vainly for a place; then a gentleman arose, with a bow and a glance of admiration in his eyes, and gave her his.

Of course Annie thanked him, and took it, and the gentleman lounged carelessly against the seat in front, just where Annie could see how handsome he was, and where, once or twice, their eyes met, very accidentally.

At Chiseldale, the courteous stranger assisted Annie to alight; and lifted his hat and smiled, as the train steamed on.

It was only an episode—a very trifling one; and Annie, though her cheeks were faintly flushed, forgot it all when she found the Chiseldale carriage had been sent to meet her.

It seemed like a sudden transformation into fairyland—this new life at Chiseldale; and Annie wondered how ever it had fallen to her lot to be so contentedly happy.

There were such elegant little *tete-a-tete* dinners with Edith, to whom nothing was denied that money could purchase; there were daily drives in the shady park, and boating on the lake, and long, delightful hours to herself, when she was free as air to wander around the grounds, or enjoy the grand library, or loiter in her room—a dainty, cool, shaded place.

Then the company—an ever-flowing stream of guests, that changed like a kaleidoscope. Women with a new toilet twice a day; children dressed like fashion-plates, and waited on by bonnets in French caps; gentlemen who rode, and shot, and fished, and played billiards

and danced; but never one—never one, as handsome as the cavalier of the train, whose dark eyes had haunted Annie more times than she would have liked to confess.

She knew the names of the guests—Edith kept her posted, and everybody was kind to her—with an aristocratic way that hid the patronizing manner, and Annie had come to think her mother's prophesy *might* come true, after all, only—only, those other dark eyes were forever in her mind.

Some such reverie as this was disturbing Annie as she tied Edith's sash, one cool, bright September day, until the child's voice dispelled it:

"Take extra pains, Annie, will you? 'Cause Mr. Helmsleigh's coming to-day, and he always calls me his wife. Oh, I like him, Annie—*awful*. You ought just to see his mustache—blackest ink."

Annie laughed; then the force of the child's words suddenly struck her—a mustache—black! A quick throb of her heart, then a half sneer at her foolishness; as if there were not thousands of black mustaches besides—*his*.

At five o'clock that day, Edith insisted on being driven down to the depot in the carriage that was to meet Mr. Helmsleigh; and of course Annie was in attendance—neat, trim, pretty, graceful and self-possessed, until Edith called out, vehemently, as they watched the passengers alight:

"Oh—there he is! there he is!"

And then the warm color flushed Annie's face, and her eyes told their glad surprise to the handsome gentleman who had hurried to the carriage, something like satisfaction on his own face as he raised his hat to her, and took Edith up in his arms.

"Ain't I glad you've come, Mr. Helmsleigh! 'cause me and Annie ain't been to the Glen yet, and you'll take us—won't you?"

Helmsleigh laughed as he turned to Annie:

"Allow me to accept the introduction, Miss Annie, and to assure you I am pleased you remembered me. I am Edward Helmsleigh."

That was the second episode, and then—oh, so soon, so fast, Annie found her whole heart was lost to this handsome guest of the Moss at Chiseldale; this gentleman who managed so often to see her, in such unexpected places, at such unexpected times.

Then, tiny little bouquets came to her by the footman, who reserved his knowing grins until his back was turned on the gentle, happy girl, whose life seemed more a fairy's dream than ever.

Somehow—Annie herself could not tell how; she never stopped to reason it out—but somehow it came to be quite the programme for her to walk down the laurel avenue every night about half-past eight, and for Mr. Helmsleigh to meet her; and then, arm-in-arm they would walk to and fro, and Annie would listen to such sweet words—not quite an avowal of love, oh, no, it was not time for that, yet, but to such tender, dainty flatteries, and such blissful questionings, that, whether she positively answered them or no, certainly left no doubt on the gentleman's mind of the girl's thorough, ardent love for him.

Then—several times he had stolen a kiss from her; once, he had called her "darling," and then—in all the full glow of her exquisite happiness, she had written such a hopeful, eloquent letter to her mother, telling her the prophesy might come true yet, and bidding her wait only a fortnight longer, when the holiday came, and she would come home and tell her all.

Such dreams as little Annie dreamed, waking and sleeping. Dreams of the engagement-ring for the finger Mr. Helmsleigh had said was so white and tapering; dreams of the time, somewhere in the rosy future, when she would be even happier than now.

The fortnight slipped by on angel's wings. Days of anticipation, and the meetings every evening, now under the honeysuckle arbor, now on the shaded banks of the lake, now in the avenue of beeches—it was alike to Annie, since she leaned on her lover's arm, and listened to his low, sweet voice.

This night—the very last before Annie was to visit home—she had gone down to the lake-shore as usual; not to wait for him, but to find him, pacing to and fro, as if impatient of her slightest delay.

"I am so glad you've come, Annie—so glad. I've been waiting half an hour, and I had something to tell you."

Her heart gave a flutter of rapture as he kissed her white forehead.

"I have been wondering what I shall do without you, little girl—for my visit is up to-morrow."

She grasped his arm, with a little involuntary cry.

"To-morrow?"

"Yes—so soon. And I have been so happy with you, dear, that to go back to everyday life again, with no more of these delightful evenings, seems more than I can welcome. But New York and Chiseldale are very different places."

A strange feeling, whether pain or not she could not define, arose in the girl's heart, as she lifted her sweet gray eyes, so full of mute idolatry, to his.

"My home is in New York, too, Mr. Helmsleigh. If you—"

She hesitated, and Helmsleigh smiled—one of his beautiful smiles, that invariably stirred her to her very heart's core.

"You are thoughtful, my dear; but I think it best that the end should come where it began—here. If I should visit you in New York, it might be awkward, you know. My wife will be back from Europe."

Her white, horrified face was suddenly lifted, a living petrification, to his.

"Your—your—what?"

"The fact of my wife's existence has made no difference to our little idyl; I know you will forgive me that I could not help loving you."

A cold, trembling hand bade him stop; for the life of him he dared not disobey the gesture.

"Please go—right away!"

It came in gasps—in a low, agonized tone that he never forgot; he looked at her scared, anguished face, at her horror-stricken eyes; then turned away, and left her alone to her sorrow, her stinging, scorching sorrow.

For an hour she paced up and down, silent, tearless as a marble statue; then sounds of music and dancing came in the night air over the waters of the quiet lake; and with the sound aroused all the fullness of the agony in her heart; awoke all the sense of utter desolation, all the consciousness of the deliberate wrong done her, until heart and head could endure the pain no longer; and then—

A wild, wailing autumn storm was abroad the next morning, when they carried it reverently in—with dripping golden hair; and only Edward Helmsleigh, who had left hours before on the train, could have told why Annie Carleton's stiffened form was found under the waters of the lake.

Months afterward, he heard the story, and

from the hour he learned what he had wrought, his hair began to turn to gray—fit tribute to the pitiful doom of the heart-broken girl.

And the mother, heart-broken, accepted the common report—that Annie had fallen in and been drowned, and reads and reads the letter the girl sent her in all the flush and glory of her heart's great love—the only comfort left her.

Victoria:

OR,

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE CLIFFE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

CASTLE CLIFFE.

LADY AGNES was not an early riser. Noon usually found her breakfasting in her boudoir; but on this particular morning she came sailing down stairs, to the infinite astonishment and amazement of all beholders, just as the little French clock in the breakfast-parlor was chiming eight. Genevieve sat on an ottoman opposite the mantel, with a porcelain bowl on her lap, a silver spoon in her hand, gazing intently at the portrait, and feasting her eyes and her palate at the same time. She started up as Lady Agnes entered with a smiling courtesy, and came forward with frank grace, holding up her blooming cheeks to be saluted.

"Good-morning, *petite*! Fresh as a rose-bud, I see! So you were up and out of your nest before the birds this morning! Was it because you did not sleep well last night?"

"Oh no, madam. I slept very well; but I always rise early. It is not wrong, is it?"

"By no means. I like to see little girls up with the sun. Well, Tom, good-morning!"

"Can I believe my eyes?" exclaimed Tom Shirley, entering, and starting back in affected horror at the sight. "Do I really behold my aunt Agnes, or is this her ghost?"

"Oh, nonsense. Ring the bell. Have you seen the colonel? Oh here he comes. Have you ordered the carriage to be in readiness, Cliffe?"

"Yes. What is the bill of fare for to-day?" said the colonel, sauntering in.

"You know we are to return all those calls—such a bore, too! and this the first day of our little girl's stay among us! What will you do all day, my dear?"

"Oh, she will amuse herself, never fear," said the colonel. "I found her racing like a wild Indian. Don't blush, Vivie; it's all right. And she can spend the day in exploring the place with her *bonne*."

"Would you like to see the house, Victoria?" inquired Lady Agnes, taking her place at the head of the table, and laying marked emphasis on the name.

"If that does not inconvenience you at all, madam."

"Let Margaret stay from school, then, and show her the place," said the colonel.

"Margaret! Absurd! Margaret couldn't show it any more than a cat. Tom, can you not get a half-holiday this afternoon, and show cousin Victoria over the house?"

"Certainly, if that young gentleman herself does not object," said Tom, buttering his roll with gravity.

The small gentleman in question, standing in the middle of the floor, in her white dress, and blue ribbons, and flaxen curls falling to her waist, did not object, though had Margaret been decided upon as chaperon, she probably would have done so. Both cousins had been met last night for the first time; but her feelings toward them were quite different. Toward Tom they were negative; she did not dislike him, but she did not care for him one way or the other. Toward Margaret they were positive repulsion, and expressed exactly what she felt toward that young person. Still, she looked a little doubtful as to the propriety of being chaperoned by a great boy six feet high; but grandmamma suggested it, and papa was smiling over at her, so there could be no impropriety, and she courted it gravely in assent, and made toward the door. Margaret entered at the same moment, arrayed in pink muslin. She passed mademoiselle with a low "Good-morning, cousin Genevieve!" and took her place at the table.

"Won't you stay and take a cup of coffee and a pistolet with us?" called her father after her, as she stood in the hall, balancing herself on one foot, and beating time *a la militaire* with the other.

"No, papa, thank you; I never drink coffee. We always had bread and milk for breakfast in the convent."

"Oh! that everlasting convent!" exclaimed Lady Agnes, pettishly. "We will have another martyred abbess in the family, Cliffe, if you ever send the little nonette back to her Paris school."

Immediately after breakfast, Tom donned his college-school trencher, slung his satchel over his shoulder, and set out with Margaret to Cliftonlea, telling that young lady, as he went, he expected it would be jolly showing the little original over the house. And as her toilet was made, Lady Agnes and her son rolled away in the great family carriage, emblazoned with the Cliffe coat of arms; and Genevieve was left to her own devices.

In all her life she could not remember a morning that went so swiftly as that, flying about in the sunshine, half wild with the sense of liberty, and the hitherto unimagined delights of the place. She found her way to the Swiss farm-house, and was transported by the little pigs, and calves, and poultry; and she and Jeannette got into the little white boat, and were rowed over the sparkling ripples of the lake by one of the farmer's girls. She wandered away down even to the extreme length of the grand avenue, firing Jeannette nearly to death; made the acquaintance of the lodge-keeper and his wife at the Italian villa, and was even more enchanted by a little baby they had there than she had been before by the pigs and calves; and when Tom returned for his early dinner at one o'clock, he found her swinging back and forward through space, like an animated pendulum, in a great swing in the trees.

The young lady and gentleman had a *tete-a-tete* dinner that day; for Margaret was a half boarder at the Cliftonlea Female Academy, and always dined there; and before the meal was over, they were chatting away with the familiarity of old friends. At first, Mademoiselle Vivie was inclined to treat Master Tom with dignified reserve; but his animated volubility and determination to be on cordial terms were not to be resisted; and they rose from the table the best friends in the world.

To visit Cliftonlea without going to Castle Cliffe was like visiting Rome without going to St. Peter's. All sight-seers went there, and were enchanted, but few of them ever had so fluent and voluble a guide as its heiress had now. From gallery to gallery, through beautiful saloons and supper-rooms, through bloom-

ing conservatories, magnificent suites of drawing-rooms, oak parlors and libraries, Tom enthusiastically strode, gesticulating, describing, and inventing sometimes, when his memory fell short of facts, in a way that equally excited the surprise and admiration of his small auditor. The central, or main part of the castle, according to Tom, was as old as the days of the Fifth Henry—as indeed its very ancient style of architecture, and an inscription in antique French on an old mantel-piece, proved. To the right and left there were two octagonal towers: one called the Queen's Tower, built in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and so named because that illustrious lady herself had once honored it with a week's visit—the other, called the Agnes Tower, had been erected in the same reign at a later date, and was named after Lady Agnes Cliffe, the bride of its then proprietor.

Tom had wonderful stories to tell about these old places; but the great point of attraction was the picture-gallery, an immense hall lighted with beautiful oriel windows of stained glass, and along whose walls hung the pictured faces of all the Cliffes, who had reigned there from time immemorial. Gallant knights in wigs, and swords, and doublets; courtly dames in diamond stomachers, and head-dresses three feet high, looked down with their dead eyes on the last of their ancient race—the little girl in the white dress and blue ribbons, who held her breath with awe, and felt as if she heard the ghostly rustling of their garments against the oak walls. Master Tom, who had no Cliffe blood in his veins, and no bump of veneration on his head, ran on with an easy fluency that would have made his fortune as a stump-lec-turer.

"That horrid old fright up there, in the baggy and knee-breeches, is Sir Marmaduke Cliffe, who built the two towers in the days of Queen Elizabeth; and that sour-looking dame, with a ruffe sticking out five feet, was Lady Agnes Neville, his wife. That there is Sir Lionel, who was master here in the days of the Merry Monarch—the handsomest Cliffe among them, and everybody says I'm his born image. That good-looking man over there with the crucifix in her hand and the whites of her eyes upturned, was the lady abbess, once of the ruined convent behind here, and got her brains knocked out by that abominable scamp, Thomas Cromwell. There's the present Lady Agnes in white satin and pearls—her bridal dress, I believe. And there—do you know who that is?"

A young man, looking like a prince in the uniform of an officer of dragoons, with the blue eyes, golden hair, and laughing face, she knew by heart; and a flush of light rose to her face as she looked.

"It is my papa—my own splendid papa. And there isn't one among them all who looks half as much like a king as he!"

"That's true enough; and as he is the best, so he is the last. I suppose they will be hanging up yours near it very soon."

"But my mamma's, where is that? Is not her picture here as well as the rest?"

Tom looked at her, and suppressed a whistle.

"Your mamma's—oh! I never saw her. I don't know anything about her. Her picture is not here, at all events!"

"She is dead!" said the child, in her manner of grave simplicity. "I never saw my dear mamma!"

"Well, if she is dead, I suppose she can't have her portrait taken very easily, and that accounts! And now, as I'm about tired of going from one room to another, suppose we go out and have a look at the old convent I promised to show you. What do you think of the house?"

"It's a very great place!"

"And the Cliffes have been very great people in their time, too; and are yet, for that matter: best blood in Sussex, not to say in all England."

"Are you a Cliffe?"

"—more's the pity! I am nothing but a Shirley!"

"Is that girl?"

"What girl?"

"Mademoiselle Marguerite. We three are cousins, I know, but I can't quite understand it."

"Well, look here, then, and I'll demonstrate it so that even your low capacity can grapple with the subject. Once upon a time, there were three brothers by the name of Shirley; the oldest married Lady Agnes Cliffe, and he is dead; the second married my mother, and they're both dead; the third married Mademoiselle Marguerite's mother, and they're both dead, too—dying was a bad habit the Shirleys had. Don't you see—it's as clear as mud."

"I see! and that is why you both live here."

"That's why! And Mag would have had this place, only you turned up—had job for her, you see! Sir Roland offered to take me, but as I had some claim on Lady Agnes, and none at all on him, she wouldn't hear of such a thing at any price."

"Sir Roland is the stout gentleman who told me to call him uncle, then, and—grandmamma's brother. Has he no wife?"

"None now; she's defunct. He has a stepson up at Oxford, Leicester Shirley—Cliffe, they call him, and just the kind of fellow you would like, I know. Perhaps he will marry you some day when he comes home; it would be just the thing for him!"

"Marry me! He will do nothing of the kind," said Miss Vivie, with some dignity, and a good deal of asperity. "I shall marry nobody but Claude. I wouldn't have anybody else for the world."

"Who is Claude?"

"Why, just Claude—nothing else; but he will be Marquis de St. Hilary some day, and I will be Madame la Marquise. He is a great deal handsomer than you, and I like him ever so much better!"

"I don't believe it! I'm positive you like me better than anybody else in the world, or at least you will when we come to be a little better acquainted. Almost every little girl falls in love the moment she claps her eyes on me!"

Genevieve lifted her blue eyes, flashing with mingled astonishment and indignation; but Tom's face was perfectly dismal in its seriousness, and he bore her angry regards without wincing.

"You say the thing that is no: true, Monsieur Tom. I shall never love you as long as I live!"

"Then all I have to say is, that you ought to be pitted for your want of taste. But it is just as well; for, in case you did love me, it would only be an affair of a broken heart, and all that sort of thing; for I wouldn't marry you if you were the heiress of Castle Cliffe ten times over. I know a girl—I saw her dancing on the tight-rope at the races the other day—who is a thousand times prettier than you, and whom I intend making Mrs. S. as soon as I get out of roundabout jackets."

Genevieve looked horrified. In her peculiar simplicity, she took every word for gospel.

"A tight-rope dancer! Oh, Tom! what will grandmamma say?"

"I don't care what she says!" said Tom, desperately, thrusting his hands into his pockets. "A tight-rope dancer is as good as anybody else; and I won't be the first of the family, either, who has tried that dodge."

This last was added *sotto voce*; but the little girl heard it, and there was a perceptible drawing up of the small figure, and an unmistakable erecting of the proud little head.

"I don't see how any Cliffe could make such a *mesalliance*, and I don't believe any of them ever did it. I should think you would be ashamed to speak of such a thing, cousin Tom."

"You despise ballet-dancers, then?"

"Of course."

"And actresses, also?"

"*Mais certainement!* It is all the same. Claude often said he would die before he would make a low marriage; and so would I."

Tom thrust his hands deeper into his trousers pockets, rolled up his eyes to the firmament, and gave vent to his feelings in a prolonged whistle.

"And this little princess, with her chin up and her eyes flashing, is the daughter of a nameless French actress," was his thought.

Then, aloud:

"You seem to have very distinct ideas on the subject of matrimony, Miss Victoria. Was it in your convent you learned them?"

"Of course not. But Claude, and I, and Ignacia have talked of it a thousand times in the holidays. And, cousin Tom, if you marry your dancing-girl, how will you live! You are not rich!"

"No; you might swear that, without fear of perjury. But my wife and I intend to set up a cigar-shop, and get our rich relations to patronize us. There, don't look so disgusted, but look at the ruins."

While talking, they had been walking along a thickly-wooded avenue, and, as Tom spoke, they came upon a semi-circular space of green-sward, with the ruins of an old convent in the center. Nothing now remained but an immense stone cross, bearing a long inscription in Latin, and the remains of one superb window in the only unruined wall. The whole place was overrun with ivy and tangled juniper, even the broad stone steps that led up to what once had been the grand altar.

"Look at those stains," said Tom, pointing to some dark spots on the upper step. "They say that's blood. Lady Edith Cliffe was the last abbess here, and she was murdered on those steps, in the days of Thomas Cromwell, for refusing to take the oath of supremacy. The sunshine and storms of hundreds of years have been unable to remove the traces of the crime. And the townfolk say a tall woman, all in black and white, walks here on moonlight nights. As I have never had the pleasure of seeing the ghost, I cannot vouch for that part of the story, but I can show you her grave. They buried her down here, with a stake through her heart; and the place is called the 'Nun's Grave' from that day to this."

Genevieve stooped down and reverently kissed the stained stones.

"I am glad I am a Cliffe!" she said, as she arose and followed him down the paved aisle.

The grave was not far distant. They entered a narrow path, with dismal yew and gloomy elm interlacing their branches overhead, shutting out the summer sunshine—a spot as dark and lonely as the heart of an old primeval forest. And at the foot of a patriarchal dryad of yew was a long mound, with a black marble slab at the head, without name, or date, or inscription.

"Horrid, dismal old place!—isn't it?" said Tom, flinging himself on the grass. "But, dismal or not, I am about done up, and intend to rest here. Why, what is the matter?"

For Genevieve, looking down at the grass, had suddenly turned of a ghastly whiteness, and sunk down in a violent tremor and faintness across the mound. Tom sprang up in dire alarm.

"Vivie, Vivie! What in the world is this?"

She did not speak.

He lifted her up, and she clung with a nameless, trembling terror to his arm, her very lips blanched to the whiteness of death.

"Vivie, what under heaven is this?"

The pale lips parted.

"Nothing!" she said, in a voice that could scarcely be heard. "Let us go away from this."

He drew her arm within his, and led her away, mystified beyond expression. But, in the terrible after-days, when the "Nun's Grave" had more of horror for him than Hades itself, he had reason to remember Vivie's first visit there.

CHAPTER IX.

VICTORIA REGIA.

BEFORE the end of the first week, the little heiress was thoroughly domesticated at Castle Cliffe. Everybody liked her, from Lady Agnes down to the kitchen-maids, who sometimes had the honor of dropping her a courtesy, and receiving a gracious little smile in return. Lady Agnes had keen eyes, and reading her like a printed book, saw that the little girl was aristocrat to the core of her heart. If she wept, as she once or twice found occasion to do, it was like a little lady, noiselessly, with her handkerchief to her eyes, and her face buried in her arm. If she laughed, it was careless, low, and musical, and with an air of despising laughter all the time. She never rumped; she never screamed; she was never rude. Heaven forbid! The blue blood of the Cliffes certainly flowed with proud propriety through those delicate veins. The girl of twelve, too, understood it all, as the duckling understands swimming, by intuition, and was as radically and unaffectedly haughty in her way as Lady Agnes in hers. She was proud of the Cliffes, and of their long pedigree; proud of their splendid house and its splendid surroundings; proud of her stately grandmother; and proudest of all of her handsome papa.

"The child is well named," said Lady Agnes, with a conscious smile. "She is Victoria—exactly like her namesake, that odd, wild, beautiful flower, the Victoria Regia."

Everybody in Cliftonlea was wild to see the heiress—the return of her father had been nothing to this furor; so the white muslin and blue ribbons were discarded for brilliant silks and nodding plumes, and Lady Agnes and Miss Shirley drove through the town in a grand barouche, half buried among amber-velvet cushions, and looking like a full-blown queen and a princess in the bud. Certainly, it was a bewildering change for the little gray-robed *pensionnaire* of the French convent.

was a perfect miracle of Arabian beauty, snowy white, slender-limbed, arched-necked, fiery-eyed, full of spirit, yet gentle as a lamb to a master-hand. It was a present from Sir Roland to the heiress of Castle Cliffe, and had been christened by that small young lady "Claude"—a title which Tom indignantly repudiated for its former one of "Leicester." The girl and boy were bound for a gallop to Sir Roland's home, Cliffe-wood, a distance of some seven miles; and while Tom stood holding in the impatient ponies, the massive hall door was thrown open by the obsequious porter, and the heiress herself tripped out.

Tom had very gallantly told her once that the rope dancer was a thousand times prettier than she; but looking at her now, as she stood for one moment on the topmost step, he cried inwardly, "Precious!" and repented. Certainly, nothing could have been lovelier—the light, slender figure in an exquisitely-fitting habit of blue; yellow gauntlets on the fairy hands, one of which lightly lifted her flowing skirt, and the other poised the most exquisite of riding-whips; the fiery lances of sunshine glancing through the sunny curls flowing to the waist, the small black riding hat and waving plume tied with azure ribbons; the sunlight flashing in her bright blue eyes, and kissing the rose-tint on her pearly cheeks. Yes, Victoria Shirley was pretty—a very different-looking girl from the pale, dim, colorless Genevieve who had arrived a little over a week before. And, as she came tripping down the steps, planting one dainty foot in Tom's palm, and springing easily into her saddle, his boy's heart gave a quick bound, and his pulses an electric thrill. He leaped on his own horse; the girl smilingly kissed the tips of her yellow gauntlets to Lady Agnes in her chamber window, and they dashed away in the teeth of the wind, her curls waving behind like a golden banner. Vivian rode well—it was an accomplishment she had learned in France; the immense iron gates under the lofty stone arch split open at their approach, and away they dashed through Cliffe-wood. All the town flew to the doors and windows, and gazed, in profound admiration and envy, after the twain as they flew by—the bold, dark-eyed, dark-haired, manly boy, and the delicate fairy, with the blue eyes and golden hair, beside him. The high wind deepened the roses and brightened the light in Vivian's eyes, until she was glowing like a second Aurora when they leaped off their horses at the villa's gates. This villa was a pretty place—a very pretty place, but painfully new; for which reason Vivian did not like it at all. The grounds were spacious and beautifully laid out; the villa was a chef d'œuvre of Gothic architecture; but it had been built by Sir Roland himself, and nobody ever thought of coming to see it. Sir Roland did not care, for he liked comfort and a great deal better than historic interest and leaky roofs, and told Lady Agnes, with a good-natured laugh, when she spoke of it in her scornful way, that she might live in her old ruined convent if she liked, but he would stick to his commodious villa. Now he came down the grassy lawn to meet them, and welcomed them with cordiality; for the new heiress was an immense favorite of his already.

"Aunt Agnes thought it would do you good to gallop over," said Tom, smiling at her. "So here we are. But you needn't invite us to stay; for, as this is Saturday afternoon, you know it couldn't be heard of."

"Oh, yes!" said Vic—a name which Tom had adopted for shortness; "we ought to go right back; for Tom is going to show me something wonderful down on the shore. Why, uncle Roland, what is this?"

They had entered a high, cool hall, with glass doors thrown open at each end, showing a sweeping vista of lawns, and terraces, and shrubbery, rich with statues and portraits; and before one of these the speaker had made so sudden a halt that the two others stopped also. It was a picture, in a splendid frame, of a little boy some eight years old, with long, bright curls, much the same as her own; blue eyes, too, but so much darker than hers that they seemed almost black; the straight, delicate features characteristic of the Cliffe, and a smile like an angel's. It was really a beautiful face—much more so than her own; and the girl clasped her hands in her peculiar manner, and looked at it in a perfect ecstasy.

"Why," Tom was beginning impatiently, "where did you—?" when Sir Roland, smilingly, caught his arm and interposed.

"Hold your tongue, Tom. Little boys should be seen and not heard. Well, Vic, do you know who that is?"

"It looks like—it does look like"—a little doubtfully, though—"my papa."

"So it does; the forehead, and mouth, and hair are alike, exactly. But it is not your papa. Guess again."

"Oh, I can't. I hate guessing. Tell me who it is."

"It is a portrait of my stepson, Leicester, taken when a child; and the reason you never saw it before is, it has been getting new-framed. Good-looking little fellow, eh?"

"Oh, it is beautiful. It is an angel!" Sir Roland and Tom both laughed, but Tom's was a perfect shout.

"Leicester Cliffe an angel! Oh, ye gods! won't I tell him the next time I see him; and he the veriest scamp that ever flogged a fag!"

"Nothing of the kind, Vic!" said Sir Roland as Vic colored with mortification. "Leicester is an excellent fellow; and when he comes home, you and he will be capital friends, I'm sure."

Vic brightened up immediately.

"And when will he be home, uncle Roland?"

"That's uncertain—perhaps at Christmas." "Is he old?"

"Considerably stricken in years, but not quite as old as Methuselah's cat," struck in Tom. "He is eighteen."

"Does he look like that now?"

"Except that all those young lady-like curls, and that innocent expression, and those short jackets are gone, he does; and then he is as tall as a May-pole, or as Tom Shirley. Come in and have lunch."

Sir Roland led the way; and after luncheon the cousins mounted their horses and rode to the castle. The sun was setting in an orange flame of crimson and black, and the wind had risen to a perfect gale, but Tom insisted on his cousin accompanying him to the shore, nevertheless.

"I won't be able to show the Dev—I mean the Demon's Tower, until next Saturday, unless you come now; so be off, Vic, and change your dress. It is worth going to see, I can tell you!"

Vic, nothing loth, flew up the great oaken staircase with its gilded balustrade, to her own beautiful room, and soon reappeared in a gay silk robe and black velvet basque. As she joined Tom in the avenue, she recoiled, in surprise and displeasure, to see that Margaret was with him.

under the trees, and I thought it would be only an act of Christian politeness to ask her. Come on, she won't eat you; come on, Mag!"

Tom's long legs measured off the ground as if he were shod with seven-leagued boots; and the two girls, running breathlessly at his side, had enough to do to keep up with him. The shore was about a half-mile distant, but he knew lots of short cuts through the trees; and before long they were on the sands and scrambling over the rocks, Tom holding Vic's hand, and Margaret making her way in the best manner she could, with now and then an encouraging word from him. The sky looked dark and menacing, the wind raged over the heaving sea, and the surf washed the rocks, far out, in great billows of foam.

"Look there!" said Tom, pointing to something that really looked like a huge mass of stone tower. "That's the Demon's Tower, and they call that the Storm Bar beyond it. We can walk to it now, because the tide is low, but any one caught there at high water would be drowned for certain, unless it was an uncommon swimmer. There's no danger now, though, as it's far out. So make haste, and come along."

But over the slippery rocks and slimy seaweed Vic could not "come along" at all. Seeing which, Tom lifted her in his arms, with as much ceremony and difficulty as if she had been a kitten; and calling to Margaret to mind her eye, and not break her neck, bounded from jag to jag with as much ease as a goat. Margaret, slipping, and falling, and rising again, followed patiently on, and in fifteen minutes they were in the cavern, and Vic was standing, laughing and breathless, on her own pedals once more.

It was in reality a tower without a top; for some twenty feet above them they could see the dull, leaden sky, and the sides were as steep, and perpendicular, and unclimbable as the walls of a house. The cavern was sufficiently spacious; and opposite the low, natural archway by which they entered were half a dozen rough steps cut in the rocks, and above them was a kind of seat made by a projecting stone. The place was filled with hollow, weird sounds, something between the sound we hear in sea-shells and the mournful sighing of an Eolian harp, and the effect altogether was unspeakably wild and melancholy. Again Vic clasped her hands, this time in mingled awe and delight.

"What a place! How the sea and wind roar among the rocks. I could stay here forever!"

"I have often been here for hours on a stretch with Leicester Cliffe," said Tom. "We cut those steps in the rock; and, when we were little shavers, he used to play Robinson Crusoe, and I, Man Friday. We named it Robinson Crusoe Castle; but that was too long for every day; so the people in Lower Cliffe—the fishing village over there—called it the Devil's Tower. Vic, sing a song, and hear how your voice will echo round those stone walls!"

"But," said Margaret, "I don't think it's safe to stay here, Tom. You know when the tide rises it fills this place nearly to the top, and would drown us all!"

"Don't be a goose, Maggie; there's no danger, I tell you! Vic, get up in Robinson Crusoe's seat, and I'll be Man Friday again, and lie here at your feet."

Vic got up the steps, and seated herself on the stone ledge; Tom flung himself on the ground, and Margaret sat down on a pile of dry seaweed in the corner. Then Vic sang some wild Venetian barcarole, that echoed and re-echoed, and rung out on the wind, in a way that equally amazed and delighted her. Again and again she sang, fascinated by the wild and beautiful echo, and Tom joined in loud choruses of his own, and Margaret listened seemingly quite as much delighted as they, until suddenly, in the midst of the loudest strain, she sprang to her feet with a sharp cry.

"Tom! Tom! the tide is upon us!" Instantly Tom was on his feet, as if he were made of iron, and he sprang to the top of the black arch. For nearly two yards, the space before the archway was clear of the surf, but owing to a peculiar curve in the shore, the tower had become an island, and was almost encircled by the foaming waves. The dull day was darkening, too; the fierce blast dashed the spray up in his eyes, and in one frantic glance he saw that escape was impossible. He could not swim to the shore in that surf; neither he nor they could climb up the steep sides of the cavern, and they all must drown where they were. Not for himself did he care—brave Tom never thought of himself in that moment, nor even of Margaret, only of Vic. In an instant he was back again, and kneeling at her feet on the stone floor.

"I promised to protect you!" he cried out, "and see how I have kept my word!"

"Tom, is it true? Can we not escape?"

"No; the sea is around us on every hand, and in twenty minutes will be over that arch and over our heads! Oh, I wish I had been struck dead before ever I brought you here!"

"And can we do nothing?" said Vic, clasping her hands—always her impulse. "If we could only climb to the top."

Again Tom bounded to his feet.

"I will try! There may be a rope there, and it is a chance, after all!"

In a twinkling he was at the top of Robinson's seat, and clutching frantically at invisible fragments of rock, to help him up the steep ascent. But in vain; worse than in vain. Neither sailor nor monkey could have climbed up there, and, with a sharp cry, he missed his hold, and was hurled back, stunned and senseless, to the floor. The salt spray came dashing in their faces as they knelt beside him. Margaret shrieked, and covered her face with her hands, and covered down, and "Oh, Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae!" murmured the pale lips of the French girl.

And still the waters rose.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 269.)

WELSH MARRIAGES.—The Welsh pursue an excellent practice on the occasion of a wedding of persons who have to labor for their bread. Each guest pays a shilling, which act, when the gathering is large, as it generally is, enables the young couple to make a start in life with their cow or pig; at all events, it provides them with articles of furniture, as there are sometimes two hundred persons assembled at a South Welsh wedding. In former times, in South Wales, previous to a wedding, a herald, with a crook or wand adorned with ribbons, used to take a circuit of the neighborhood and make his "bidding," or invitation, in a prescribed form. But the knight-errant cavalcade on horseback—the carrying off the bride—the r. scene—the wordy war, in rhyme between the parties, which formed a singular specimen of mock contest at a Welsh wedding, is now almost laid aside. In the neighborhood of Aberystwith, however, one writer declares he has seen a cavalcade of at least a hundred of both sexes, with the bride mounted behind the bridegroom on a hard-trotting nag.

DECEIVING AND RECEIVED.

BY N.

ONE SIDE.

Cupid, his victims to beguile,
(The huntsman shew'd!) to covert hies;
He masks his arts 'neath Beauty's smile,
And darts his shafts from Beauty's eyes.

THE OTHER.

But when the rogue is hunting dears,
In lieu of flag for stalking deer,
A mustache glossy calms their fears,
As curiously they draw near.

NOTE.

'Tis thus, deceiving and deceived.
By mutual arts they lure each other;
Both laugh to think their wiles believed,
Till Cupid links the fools together.

RED ROB.

The Boy Road-Agent.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE," "HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

ZELLA AT THE GROTT.

A WALL as if of agony burst from the lips of the negro boy, Slyly, when he saw Asa Sheridan stagger and fall in a dead faint in the mountain grotto, whither he had just conducted him.

"Oh, de good Lord had marcy!" the youth cried, rolling upon the earth and tearing at his head as though a nest of hornets had attacked him; "what will dis poo' nigger boy do? He's dead sure as de Lord's in heaben, and de young missus told me—boo-hoo!—Oh, de Lord help me!"

A thought appeared to enter the youth's mind all at once, and, springing to his feet, he glided out of the grotto, and sped away down the mountain steep with all the speed of a Tyrolean youth on his native Alps.

But a brief period had elapsed ere he returned, followed by a female.

A cry of joy burst from the boy's lips, and he executed a leap into the air that would have done credit to a gymnast, as he entered the grotto. For in the dim glow of the light he had seen burning in the retreat he saw that Sheridan had recovered from his swoon, and was just finishing the painful task of binding up his wound.

"Oh, Missus Zella!" he shouted, clapping his hands in an excess of joy; "de young man's come to—he's alive again. Ki-yi, missus, and ar'n't dis nigger chile tickled plum to death!"

"You were wounded were you, stranger?" asked the sweet, low voice of the woman, advancing toward the young man, and pushing back the shawl that was thrown hoodlike over her head.

Sheridan raised his eyes and beheld the beautiful face that he had seen at the window of the "judgment hall," the face of the angel, who had been instrumental in delivering him from the dungeon of the ruins. A thrill of indescribable joy shot through his whole frame, and his heart took new courage and grew stronger in that feeling which the first glimpse of her fair face had awakened within it.

The sweet, blue eyes of the girl looked down upon him with a light of angelic serenity shining from their azure depths. The pretty face was flushed and clothed in an expression of the greatest anxiety. She was excited and nearly out of breath in consequence of her hasty ascent of the steep mountain side.

Sheridan comprehended the whole situation at a glance. Frightened by his fainting, Slyly had hurried away and brought his young mistress there; and seeing the maiden was alarmed, the wounded man hastened to relieve her of her fears.

"Yes," he replied, with an air of relief, "I received a rifle-wound as I sped across the open space, between the ruins and the chaparral, at the foot of the mountains. But, my dear, unknown young friend, the wound is so slight, that I am almost ashamed to admit that I fainted when I entered this grotto. I am very sorry that you have been put to unnecessary trouble after doing what you have for me."

"Then you know who I am?" the maiden said, gazing earnestly into the young man's face.

"I suppose you are Zella. Am I right?" "Yes, sir; I am Zella."

"The same whose face I saw at the window of the 'judgment hall'?" "The same."

"God bless you then, Zella!" the young man exclaimed, thankfully; "you have been an angel of mercy to me."

"I have done only what I considered it my duty to do—what my heart's instinct, my woman's sense of mercy guided me in."

Heart's instinct! repeated Sheridan to himself, his own heart giving a great bound; "that I would call love. Can this angel of mercy—this pure, modest flower hidden away here amid the San Juan ruins—can it be possible that she cares for me?"

His mental questioning was here interrupted by the sweet voice of Zella, who, turning to Slyly, said:

"Slyly, you will go out and keep watch. A close search is being made by the men, and some of them may have seen us, and will attempt to follow. Keep within speaking distance of the grotto."

"I'll do dat, Missus Zella," and the ebony-colored boy bounded out into the darkness.

Then Zella turned to Asa Sheridan and said: "You may think it immodest of me, young stranger, in coming to you here. But Slyly told me you were wounded and bleeding to death. I knew he could do nothing; so I came myself."

"For which I shall never cease to be grateful to you, Miss—Miss Zella," Asa replied, in a tone of the deepest interest. "Although my wound is simply a flesh-wound which I succeeded in binding up alone, I feel as thankful to you, for your good intention in coming here, as though you had saved my life. The principle of the good Samaritan is all the same. But, Zella, I am astonished to find a single rose blooming among so many deadly thorns."

"I do not understand you, Mr.—"

"Sheridan," said the young man, "Asa Sheridan is the name. But I had reference to yourself among so many—"

"I comprehend now, Mr. Sheridan," answered the fair girl, sadly, and with a mortified look; "but, do not touch upon that subject now. It is painful to me. I will visit you again, if you so desire, before you leave here; then I will tell you all."

"Yes, Zella, I desire that you do come again. I am willing to remain your prisoner here until you tell me to go, if you will be my jailer."

A confused smile lit up the maiden's fair, lovely face.

"You are extravagant of compliments, Mr.—"

Sheridan," she replied, "but I do not want you to consider yourself anybody's prisoner. I was satisfied that you would suffer violence if not death, and as my soul revolts against the commission of crime, I resolved to save you. You may have to remain here a month, or telling. This grotto can be reached by two ways only—one the path you came, and the other by climbing up a succession of dangerous ledges. Your enemies will hunt you down if possible, but whenever they give up the search and all danger is past, you will be so informed and guided away to safety. I will see that you want for nothing. Slyly is out hunting and rambling among the mountain hills most of his time, and so I can send him here without his absence being suspected. Do not hesitate to entrust any word for me to him."

"I will not, Zella; but how am I ever to repay you for this kindness? I am nothing but a penniless miner with only the clothes on my back. The Indians robbed me of all I possessed."

"Never mind, Mr. Sheridan," Zella smiled, rising to her feet, and drawing her shawl around her shoulders. "I am not doing this for money. So let that not trouble you."

"Are you going so soon?" Sheridan demanded.

"I must go. My absence may arouse suspicions. Good-night, Mr. Sheridan."

Before he could speak again she was gone, and Asa Sheridan was alone. The young man now threw himself upon the couch arranged for him, and gave way to a train of reflections. He reviewed the night's experience. It was full of horrors, perils and sufferings, but amid all the sweet, angelic face of Zella shone out like the beacon star of hope. His thoughts finally reverted to his companions, Basil Wairymond and Nathan Wolfe. But, as to where they now were, and what had been their fate, he could form no conception. He had heard sentence passed upon each, it is true, and had heard Slyly say the old man had escaped, but this was all. His mind, and heart, too, had been so confused when Zella was there, that he never once thought of inquiring after them. And now that he was alone, a spirit of restlessness took possession of him that lasted through the remainder of that terrible night.

CHAPTER XX.

LOVE IN A MOUNTAIN GROTT.

THE coming of day dispelled much of the gloom and bitter recollections of the night from the mind of Asa Sheridan; and feeling like a new man he arose from his couch and surveyed the scene spread out before him.

The sun was shining into the grotto, diffusing new life and vigor through his overworked body and mind. Birds were singing outside. The flash of a little cascade near the mouth of the grotto, could be seen pouring down in ribbons of foam. Away across the valley, over the top of a somber pinon forest, he could see the dark mountains piled up against the eastern sky like a mighty cloud-bank.

To the young exile everything seemed so bright, so pleasant, so joyous, that his mind reverted to the night's adventures as to a horrible nightmare. But his wound, his feeble strength and the many evidences of his fair rescuer's kindness around him, all were ample proof of what he had passed through. And yet he looked back to certain incidents in the night's adventures with pleasure—such as he had never before enjoyed. It was those incidents in which he was brought face to face with the fair Zella, the good angel whose transcendent beauty and gentle soul had found their way to his heart—into that sacred chamber of love.

During the day, Slyly put in an appearance with a supply of provisions, and a basket of luscious early peaches, that still grew in the neglected orchards around those ancient ruins and in many of the fertile valleys of New Mexico.

"And here's sumthin' else, Massa Shear a-ding, dat de young missus send you," said the precocious young African, drawing a time-ornament book from the bosom of his calico shirt. "Said it was the bestest she had to kill time wid, and I guess it is, for I knocked a couple ob hours coming up de mountain wid it, lookin' at de pictures. Dar's gobs of dem, massa, in de book. Jings!" and the boy gave his knee a sudden slap that started Sheridan, "but wouldn't I like to be Miss Zella's prisoner, and git lots ob good fixings to eat, and have nothing to do but look at pictures? Jings!"

"My brave little fellow," said Asa, taking the book, "you don't think what you're saying. I may be killed at any moment. My enemies might follow you here and find me, and then I reckon you'd not want to be in my place."

"Te! he! hi! hi!" laughed the boy, showing his hands into his breeches pockets and leaning back to give full flow to his exuberance of spirits, while his whole face seemed suddenly transformed into a double row of white pearls; "Said a good un on Slyly, de Weasel, as dey call me. Why, Massa Shear a-ding, dar ar'n't a man, Injin or wolf, dat can feller de Weasel. I can climb a tree quicker'n a wild-cat, and I can run like sixty and jump—oh, golly! you jis' ort to see me jump, massa. And den it'd make you run clean over to hear me sing. 'Dar was an ole nigger and his name was Uncle Ned,' or else dat odder song 'bout de 'Swanee River.'"

"Who taught you those songs, Slyly?" "De young missus. Ain't she a bully gal?" Sheridan smiled and replied:

"Some day I may have you render those songs in your happiest vein, Slyly."

As he spoke he opened the book and glanced at the title-page read aloud:

"The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe."

"Golly, don't krow dat song, massa," laughed Slyly, the Weasel.

Sheridan smiled, but did not correct the youth. He turned through the book rapidly, glancing abstractedly at each illustration.

"Tell your mistress," he at length said, "that I am a thousand times obliged to her for those kindnesses she has bestowed upon me."

"Guess I will tell her, massa; but she told me to ax you how your wound was."

"Getting along as well as could be expected."

"Crackey! dat's fine, ain't it?" exclaimed the Weasel, frisking about as though he was delighted with the news; "when I tells de young missus dat, I'll bet it'll set de blunshes a-skippin' over her face."

Slyly remained but a few minutes longer, and when he went away Asa sat down and ate of the delicious fruit sent him by Zella. When he had thus satisfied himself, he again took up the book and began turning through it, looking carelessly at each illustration. While thus engaged, he came suddenly across a sheet of note-paper, upon which had been written a letter bearing no date, but which had evidently been written the day before. The paper had never been folded, and a glance at the sin-

gle name "Aaron," to whom it was addressed, and the name of the writer, satisfied Asa that it was only awaiting an opportunity to be dispatched to its destination.

Sheridan could not resist the temptation to read it. It ran thus:

"MY DEAR AARON:
"I have long delayed writing to inquire after your worldly happiness. For these many years it has afforded me infinite pleasure and satisfaction to know you are living in constant sorrow over a lost child. You know I told you, Aaron, that I would have revenge when you won Estelle's love from me; and then deprived me of all my lands by taking advantage of a slight flaw in the title. You should have known better than to have crossed my path—aroused my Spanish blood. But I presume you know it now. I beg you will take good care of the child I left you, for I always hated the brat. But then she will be a thorn in your side to keep you constantly reminded of your lost child and my vengeance. Your daughter I still have. She is now grown to womanhood, and has large, soft, blue eyes, silken, brown hair and a sweet, angelic face. She is the very image of her mother. I see Estelle Le Grand every day in her face and form. She is well educated—several years in a convent made her all that is lovely. And, my dear Aaron, I am going to break the facts to her soon, and then—well, you can guess the rest. If I couldn't have the mother to wed, I will have the daughter."

"Yours, reverently,
"LEOPOLD HAMALLADO."

"The demon! the glowing fiend!" burst from the lips of the young miner, when he had concluded the revengeful epistle. "The description of the girl is that of Zella. Can it be possible that she is the stolen child—the beautiful woman soon to be made the wife of one she has known only as a father? (God forbid!) It cannot be possible. There must be some other girl at the ruins doomed to the fate threatened in this letter. Zella was certainly ignorant of the cruel mission being in the book. I will keep it till she comes, and I will show it to her, and find out the truth—the secrets connected with her life, and the ruins of Quivira. But there's no doubt in my mind but those 'Phantom Aztecs' are robbers—that very party of emigrants that passed through Santa Fe two or three years ago, and whom the people called Silent Tongues. Oh, the wickedness of this world!"

Slyly came daily to the mountain grotto, with food and delicacies—such as the country afforded—sent by Zella.

Sheridan walked away the time the best he could, though the hours seemed to drag by on leaden feet. His wound healed rapidly, and he grew as strong as ever. He longed to plunge out once more into the free air; but an invisible power held him a prisoner in the grotto.

Nearly a week went by ere Zella came to the grotto—it seemed a day to Asa. It was in broad daylight when she came, and her presence was hailed with infinite joy by her captive.

"It seems an age, Zella," he said, with a frank earnestness in his tone, "since I last saw you. I have read Robinson Crusoe through twice, and to kill time have begun reading it backward with the book upside down."

"Then you must know the story by heart," the maiden said, with a pleasant smile. "I must admit that literature at the ruins is scarce—in fact, limited to that single volume."

"Well, Zella, I began to think you were never coming back."

"And I began to think so, too," the maiden replied. "Ever since your escape the men have been on the constant look-out for you, but to-day they went away toward the south, and I took advantage of their absence to venture out."

"Can you tell me anything of my dear old friend, Basil Wairymond, and of Nathan Wolfe, Zella?"

"The old man was sentenced to the 'tiger-pit,' you remember," replied Zella. "Well, he was put into a pen, as I call it, and a wild panther, which the men had caught in a trap, turned in upon him."

"My God, Zella! what sort of inhuman monsters are your friends?—But, pardon me—go on, Zella; was Wairymond killed?"

"No; but he had a terrible struggle with the beast. His arm was crushed and broken in the panther's jaws, but he escaped and has not been recaptured yet. Your other friend is still in custody. Slyly and I have been trying to find where he is incarcerated, but so far have failed."

Sheridan groaned in spirit, and relapsed into a painful silence. But at length he said:

"Poor old man! he was one of the noblest-hearted men I ever met. I revered him, Zella."

"Yes, he was a noble-looking old man, and my heart bled with pity for him when I saw him standing in the 'tiger-pit,' waiting for the ferocious brute to be turned loose upon him. His tall form, his snowy beard, and stern, thoughtful face, made him an object of veneration to me. I knew, however, as he stood waiting, that he had no idea of what was to come. I knew that he possessed no weapons, and this would render his destruction certain. My wits were put to work—I wanted to save that man. I slipped around and threw a knife into the pit. It saved his life. With the weapon he afterward killed the panther; but oh, Mr. Sheridan! how my heart was wrung with pity and sadness, when I saw the old man all covered with blood, and saw his poor broken arm dangling helplessly at his side, and his white, bearded face looking up at his tormentors, so sad, so pitiful, in the glare of the torches! I wanted to rush into that horrible pit and help him—save him, but I knew I could do nothing. But God was with the innocent and just. He came to the old man's assistance. When another beast was turned loose into the pit, the old man placed his shoulder against the stone wall that barricaded the arched gateway opening into the pit. It toppled and fell, and with a shout he leaped through the opening and escaped."

"Zella, is Leopold Hamallado

have fled last night from the ruins to the Navajo agency."

"And what was that one thing, Zella?"

"The promise I made you—to come back and tell you of your friends and of the 'Phantom Aztecs.'"

"Heaven bless you, girl! I would have died here waiting for you," Sheridan said, crossing the grotto and seating himself by her side. "Zella, I cannot keep back the emotions of my heart longer—not if you despise me for my boldness. But to be plain, Zella, I love you—I loved you from the moment I first saw your face at the window of the 'Judgment hall.' Zella, it would be all I could wish for on earth to know that my love is reciprocated."

"Asa," she replied—it was the first time she had addressed him thus—"perhaps if you were away from here, and were to calmly think over the little you know of me, you would change your mind and love."

"Never, Zella," he replied, half-desponding, half-hopeful; "I am not a boy; I know my heart. Your situation, dear girl, makes my love all the stronger."

"But I have been reared as the daughter of a Spaniard, and that Spaniard is the leader of a notorious set of outlaws as ever existed."

"I care not for that, either. As I told you before—as this letter tells me—you could not help your situation."

"But what do you know of me—of my character?" she asked.

"Purity and innocence are written upon your brow, upon your heart, and upon your soul. Zella, my own heart's instinct tells me this."

"God knows," she said, sadly, "I have lived a spotless life despite the society I have lived in. For ten years I lived with a Spanish lady at Albuquerque who was a mother to me in every respect. She sent me to a Catholic school, where I obtained a liberal education. As she had no children of her own, she wanted to adopt me, but my father objected, and finally dragged me off away up here, where, for some two or three years, he has been the leader of a gang of robbers—nearly all Spanish-Mexicans, who for cruelty to captives have no equal. They have traps set all through the mountains for wild animals; and whenever a bear or panther is caught, they secure it and shut it up until they can capture an innocent miner or hunter, when the two are thrown together in that horrible 'tiger pit.' But one thing can be said to the credit of these bad men: they have never, by word or act, offered me the least insult, or uttered an immodest word in my presence. On the contrary, all seemed to vie with each other in their endeavors to make me happy and comfortable in those dismal old ruins. My supposed father told me that I was a little child when he stole me away from my father. He said my mother was dead, but he refused to tell me where my father lived, and what his name is. But to come briefly to the point, I have been living these years with a band of lawless men, and could you, Asa, conscientiously wed such a woman?"

"This detracts nothing from my love for you, Zella. The sweetest flowers of bloom amid the thorniest thistles. I know whereof I speak. My love is no boyish infatuation. For five days have I been studying this matter over, and my only fears were that you would not return to me here. I longed to lay bare my heart's love. I have now done so, and with this confession of love, Zella, I will repeat the question: will you be my wife—mine to love always—mine to cherish and protect from this cold, cruel world?"

The maiden's eyes drooped shyly. A deep flush suffused her face; her lips quivered with the joyous emotions of her young heart, and in a low, tremulous tone, said:

"Asa, my heart is yours."

Asa's heart gave a great bound of joy. He took her little brown hand in his, and drawing her closer to his wildly-throbbing breast, imprinted upon her warm, ripe red lips, the seal of their betrothal.

A deep silence succeeded, and joy reigned supreme within that mountain grotto. Never did two hearts beat more joyous in reciprocal love. For several moments they sat motionless and silent as if listening to the responsive yet silent communion going on between their hearts. The past, the present and the future with all their sorrows and dangers, were forgotten in that moment of sweet, rapturous bliss.

But this holy silence was suddenly broken—broken by the sound of footsteps ascending the rocky acclivity. The next moment a *sombrero* appeared within sight above the stony ledge in front of the mouth of the grotto, and beneath the hat appeared the dark, sinister eyes and wicked face of Leopold Hamallado, whom Asa at once recognized as the judge of the "Phantom Aztecs."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 266.)

The Rival Brothers:

OR
THE WRONGED WIFE'S HATE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,

AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.—CONTINUED.

"It is false!" Paul Schaffer cried, white to his very lips; "the old hag lies! It is likely there should exist another in the world so like Eve as to deceive Monsieur D'Arville, Miss Forest, and Hazel Wood! I tell you it is a fabrication from beginning to end! Such a resemblance would be impossible!"

"Eve," Mr. Hazelwood said, turning quietly to his daughter, "go and fetch in your sister, and do not be long. No, Mr. Schaffer; you must not leave just yet," as that gentleman made a motion to quit; "please to stay, and see the play played out. Eve will not be—ah! here she is!"

There was a general exclamation, altogether irrepressible, and Mr. Arthur Hazelwood gave a faint cry of intensest amazement, not to say consternation; for this time there entered two Eves, and which was the one that had gone out, he could not, had the fate of worlds depended on it, have told. The mantle and hat had been dropped, and the two girls stood arrayed in flowing gossamer white, their long black ringlets falling like a sable cloud over their shoulders. The same in height, in feature, in dress; in everything the resemblance was more astonishing—it was marvelous.

Mr. Hazelwood looked at the twin sisters, standing hand-in-hand, with downcast eyes, and a smile, exultant and triumphant, lit up his swarthy face.

"Now, Monsieur Schaffer, what say you to this?" Tell me which is Eve, now, if you can?"

Monsieur Schaffer said nothing; he only glanced at the twin sisters with the eyes of a baffled tiger. With his own weapons he had been foiled.

"Can anybody tell me which is Eve?" Mr. Hazelwood inquired, looking from face to face. "Monsieur D'Arville, I leave it to you!"

Ah! what resemblance can baffle love, blind though it be? Over one face, drooping and downcast, a blush and a smile was dawning. That was the face of his darling. The likeness might baffle others—it never could baffle him again. The faces were the same in every iota, but the world held only one Eve for him. He was beside her in a moment, with outstretched hands.

"Eve!" he exclaimed, "can you ever forgive me? I have been cruel, unjust and ungenerous; but think how they deceived me! I do not deserve pardon, but still I hope!"

"Hope on, hope over!" Eve said, brightly, laying both hands in his; "I forgive you and everyone else on this happy day!"

"That's very good," said Mr. Hazelwood, stroking his mustache; "I thought you would find out Eve, Monsieur D'Arville! And now, Rose, I think you have a word to say: Did you ever see that gentleman there before?"

He pointed to Paul Schaffer, and the young girl shrunk away, visibly with the same cowed and frightened look.

"Oh, yes," she said, clinging to her father; "I have seen him often."

"Where? Speak out, Rosie; no one shall hurt you now."

"I saw him in Canada first. He brought grandmother and I to England, and used to visit us often in the village."

"Did you ever meet him anywhere besides in the village?"

"Once, in the grounds here. It was one moonlight night last week. He called me Eve, and he made me say that."

"That you loved him, eh?"

"Yes," Rose said, coloring, "and a great many other things I did not like."

"That will do. And now, my lord, what say you to all this?"

Mr. Hazelwood turned to the half-open door, where two gentlemen had been standing, unobserved lookers-on. Both advanced with the words he spoke, and one was Lord Lansdowne, the other the vicar of the parish.

"It is more like the last act of a drama than a scene in every-day life," answered his lordship; "it seems to have been diamond cut diamond all through the piece."

"A most surprising affair, truly," said the clergyman, looking through his spectacles at the twin sisters; "I should never know one of these young ladies from the other. As his lordship remarks, it is more like a drama than anything else."

"And dramas always ended in marriages in my theater-going days," said Mr. Hazelwood; "so suppose we be consistent to the end. Mr. Vicar, get your book. My lord, will you be best man? Rose, will you be bridesmaid, and I am here in *parentis* to give the bride away. I am sure Mr. Schaffer and Miss Forest will be delighted to witness an impromptu wedding, even though there be no breakfast. Stand forward, D'Arville. Make sure of Eve this time, lest you should lose her again."

It was all so strikingly sudden that neither Paul Schaffer nor Una Forest could do other than look on, and wonder whether they were awake or asleep. The vicar produced book and stole. Claude D'Arville stepped forward, holding Eve by the hand. Rose and Lord Lansdowne took their places, and the ceremony began. "Wilt thou take?" etc., was twice asked, and answered, and in one moment there were no longer two Miss Hazelwoods in the room, for one of them was Madame Claude D'Arville.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A PARTING PEEP.

Yes, they were married; nothing but death could separate them more. And Mr. Hazelwood turned to Paul Schaffer, the baffled plotter, with his quiet smile of power.

"You see, Mr. Schaffer, our life-drama has ended like any other drama in a marriage; the villain of the play has been foiled, and the hero and heroine reign triumphant. There is nothing more; the curtain must fall now; and, before it drops, allow me, in the name of the company, to bid you a very good-morning, and a pleasant trip back to Canada. Shall I ring for a servant to show you out, or do you know the way yourself?"

"I shall save you the trouble, Mr. Conway Hazelwood, or Senor Mendez, or whatever your name may be," said Mr. Schaffer, with an evil sneer, "and I beg your pretty daughter to understand I shall not die of a broken heart, though I have lost her. Farewell, Miss Forest; I am sorry for you; you have lost your love as well as I, but let the ex-schoolmaster go. There are as good fish in the sea, you know, as ever were caught."

He was gone while he spoke. Eve dared not look at Una; but D'Arville opened his eyes to the widest extent, as he fixed them on her striking figure.

"What does he mean?" she slowly asked; "surely he alluded to me."

Conway Hazelwood laughed.

"Never mind, D'Arville; you have got all you want, so be satisfied and ask no questions. Look up, Una; there is balm in Gilead yet, and we will let bygones be bygones on this eventful morning. Won't you come over and wish Eve joy?"

She dared not refuse. But the white face had never been so white before, and the lips that spoke trembled. Eve's embrace was as pitying and tender as it was sincere.

"We will always be friends, cousin Una," she said, "and that miserable night and day will be as if it had never been. Where is Hazel?"

"In her own room. She is not very well," Una said, extricating herself from Eve's arms, and shrinking into the corner again.

"Must go to her, Claude. Poor dear Hazel! I must go to her at once."

"Not just at once, if you please, Mrs. D'Arville," said her father; "we have not quite done with you yet. Just take this paper, and when you have cast your eye over it, pass it to your husband."

Eve took the formidably legal-looking document he held out.

"What is it, father?"

"Your wedding-portion, my dear. A free gift of Hazelwood to you and Mr. D'Arville! There! no thanks; I don't want it. I infinitely prefer my Cuban estate, whether I am going next week, and intend taking Rose with me."

"And what am I to do? Where am I to go?" helplessly began Arthur Hazelwood.

"Very true. It seems rather a pity to turn you and Una out, doesn't it? Eve, what is to be done with this uncle and cousin of yours? The place is your own now, and you must decide."

"Then let everything be as it was! Oh, father! I could never be happy here if they had

to leave it to make room for me. Uncle Arthur, cousin Una, I shall take it as the greatest favor if you will stay here always, and let things go on for the future as they have done in the past."

Mr. Arthur Hazelwood looked inexpressibly relieved, and Una bowed with averted face. Truly, Eve was heaping coals of fire on her head.

"You're a good girl, Eve," her father said, (and D'Arville smiled approval too), "and it shall be as you say. Little Hazel shall come with Rose and me to Cuba, and we will teach her there to forget that scamp Schaffer."

"I should like to go, too," Eve said, wistfully. "I don't want to be separated from you all so soon."

"You ungrateful little minx! what do you think of that speech, Mr. Bridegroom?"

"I think it perfectly natural, monsieur! Eve will be very lonely here, I am afraid, if you carry off her sister and cousin so soon."

"And I want to see Cuba so much," pleaded Eve, "and Hazel would give a year of her life for a walk down Broadway again. Let us go with you, father—please do."

Nobody could resist that "please," no heart less hard than the nether millstone, the kiss that accompanied it. Mr. Hazelwood laughed, and pushed her back to D'Arville.

"There, keep her to yourself, will you. Yes, come; you may as well make your wedding-tour there as anywhere else. See that your furbelows are packed in a week though; for this day week precisely we start for New York, from thence to Havana. Now, go and hunt up Hazel, and tell her the news as fast as you like. It will be better than medicine for her, I dare say."

"I too have a favor to ask," said Lord Lansdowne, coming forward. "Are you overworked now, Mr. Hazelwood, or will you make room for me? I have long wished to visit America, and I should never find the trip so pleasant as now. I want to see Cuba, too; will you make room for me?"

Mr. Hazelwood grasped his hand heartily.

"With all my heart, my lord. I do not forget the debt of gratitude I owe you for your kindness to Eve. Come with us, by all means. It needed only your presence to make our party complete. And now suppose we adjourn; I see by Arthur's face we are boring him to death, and I begin to feel as if I should like some luncheon. Una, if you will see to it, we will relieve Arthur of our presence. Gentlemen, come."

And, into the great sea of the Past, two more waves, two more years, have been ingulfed forever. One last look, dear friend of mine, ere we mentally shake hands and part, at the living, breathing, existing figures, that have passed before our magic-lantern for so long.

And to begin at the very end, there is Mr. Paul Schaffer. If you ever go to that quaint French city, Montreal, and take a walk down Bonaventure street, you will see his shingle hanging out in front of one of the most stylish offices in the street. Mr. Schaffer is a rising lawyer, and a member of the Canadian legislature, and the world goes very well indeed with him. He told Eve, you remember, he would not break his heart; and he has kept his word. He has a handsome town house, and a villa at St. Croix; he has fast horses, handsome equipages, well-dressed and well-trained servants, a full cellar, full coffers, a good name, and gives the best dinner-parties of any man in Montreal. He has married a dashing Canadian belle and heiress, who thinks him perfection, or next door to it, and has never heard of that little English episode in his life that happened two years ago. It's not the rule to make the villain of the story happy and prosperous, I know, and I hate to do it; but truth is mighty and will prevail. Mr. Schaffer was flourishing in Montreal the last time I was there, and his success is no fault of mine.

Dr. Lance is in New York, training the ideas of his pupils how to shoot, and crosser than ever. He has not been to England since, but he talks of going there next long vacation.

And in England—oh, there are happy hearts there! In all broad Essex there is no happier home than Hazelwood, and none more beloved and respected by all than its master and mistress. Eve goes singing through the house all day long, like a lark, and D'Arville has turned out a regular gentleman-farmer, and takes more interest in Durhams, and crops, and over-seeing his estate, and his tenants, than ever he did in correcting French exercises and Latin themes, in his days of professorship. There is something else he takes an interest in besides fat cattle, and that is in a fat little baby with big blue eyes, that half a year ago uttered its first squall in Hazelwood. They call it Conway; and Mr. D'Arville thinks there never was nor ever will be such another baby; an opinion in which Mrs. D'Arville fully shares. Mr. D'Arville labors also under the impression that his dark-eyed wife never looks half so handsome as when she bends over that little cradle and sings its small inmate asleep; and there is no doubt he is right.

Mr. Arthur Hazelwood still drags out life in his own way, as much like a snail in its shell as ever; and Miss Forest fits like a little white ghost from room to room, shod with the shoes of silence. She is thinner than of yore, and the fair hair seems to have faded white; but whether she is happy, or whether she suffers, she is not one to wear her heart on her sleeve, and no one will ever know.

And at Black Monk's, there is a new Lady Lansdowne—a very different lady from the last. Her present ladyship is a plump, hazel-eyed, hazel-haired laughing little peevish, who answers, moreover, to the name of Hazel. Yes, indeed! that she is; and she and Lord Lansdowne are like turtle doves, and Black Monk's is a very different place to the Black Monk's of two years ago. The great event happened while they were in Cuba, and Hazel has not quite got used to being called "My Lady" yet; but she thinks it all very delightful, and tries to be stately and dignified, but the happy smiles will come in spite of her, and Lady Lansdowne will be Hazel Wood to the end of the chapter.

Mr. Conway Hazelwood resides on his Cuban estate, but he has been to England to see his little namesake, and he has made his will and has left Master Conway D'Arville all he possesses. He is not an old man, but he never will marry—he is happy enough in his peaceful latter life to atone for his tragic and bereaved youth.

Rose is in Cuba, too, the bride of a wealthy creole planter, and a near neighbor of her father's. Her old grandmother lives with her—Rose has an affection for her; notwithstanding the past, and the old lady has no call any more to tell fortunes for a living.

Yes, dear reader, they are all happy, and so we will leave them. All, perhaps, except one. For Una Forest is thirty-six years of age, and—oh, dreadful fate!—an old maid!

THE END.

WHAT SATAN SAID TO ME.

BY WALLACE PUTNAM REED.

I have lately seen the Devil,
And the tale I have to tell
Smacks a little of the evil
We've attributed to hell;

Such a story should be pondered—
Should be told, with bated breath—
Let the moral not be squandered,
Nor forgotten, short of death.

Said the Devil, when he found me—
"Sit thee down and listen well,
In ethereal coils I've bound thee,
And no man can break the spell;

Sit thee still and give attention,
I'll be brief, but I relate
Matters worthy of mention—
Matters small and matters great."

Then the Devil, waxing bolder,
Talking briskly all the while,
Though the room was growing colder,
Smiled a most infernal smile;

Then a chair he took beside me,
And himself sat softly down—
Never did such luck betide me,
Till I saw this wicked clown.

In my chair I sat as rigid
As a figure made of stone,
And my manner grew more frigid
At the Devil's scornful tone;

But he would not stop his leering,
As his tongue still faster ran,
And his scoffing and his jeering
Were against both God and man.

As he trifled with my taper,
He proposed the strangest thing—
Said that I must start a paper,
With a strong religious ring;

He would give me in a twinkling,
As his project then was ripe,
Of his pen sufficient inkling—
Leaving me to get the type.

Such a paper would find favor
With the truly pious class,
And the men whose faith did waver
Still would take it with the mass;

Others too, the artful sinners,
Would support it with a will—
In the game of life the winners,
Good or bad, are cunning still.

There would be of advertising
An abundance of the best,
For, indeed, it's quite surprising
How such sheets are in request;

Advertisements of every kind,
Dancing-halls and finishing schools—
These would come in, fast and thick—
Ink and type are useful tools.

At this moment I, awaking
From my odd and wretched dream,
Gave myself a sturdy shaking,
Just as day began to gleam;

Blowing out my feeble taper,
At one glance I assessed a note
To a certain "pious" paper,
"Send no more" was what I wrote!

Adventures in the Far West.

BY GEORGE W. BROWNE.

A Race With a Madman.

"Hold on, boys!" said Kirwan, the silent Californian, as one of our party suggested it was his turn at story-telling, "and I will tell you of a little adventure I had a few years ago, while at work in the mines of Silver Mountain."

"I had worked at the mines but a few days, when one morning as I was going there, from the camp of a friend, who lived a mile distant, I suddenly heard a strange, unearthly noise a little distance ahead. Instinctively I listened for it to be repeated. A moment later, Theard footsteps approaching; and then, I beheld a sight that I shall never forget—a madman stood before me! With his clothes torn and tattered, barefooted and bareheaded, foaming at the mouth, a wild, unearthly light in his bloodshot eyes, I beheld one of the miners—Steve Amory—mad as a madman could be. The moment he saw me, he gave another wild, unearthly cry, which sent the blood chilling through my veins."

"For full a minute the madman glared upon me. I saw plainly enough that he meant fight. But, unfortunately for me, I had a weapon of no kind; not even a pocket-knife. So to fight him, I knew was folly; for I should have been no more than a child in his mad grasp. To outrun him, I knew my chance was nearly as hopeless; but, as with another terrific yell, he bounded upon me, I gathered all the strength I possessed, and, with a silent prayer for success, started back toward the camp of my friend. Close upon my heels came the frothing madman, making the woods resound with his frightful, unearthly yells."

"Under the circumstances, I could have easily outrun Steve Amory; but as it was, the odds were against me. You all know a madman will do what a sane man cannot do, and besides, he was barefooted, while I had on my heavy mining-boots, which bore me down fearfully. Still I kept on, hoping I might reach the camp of my friend before the madman could overtake me."

"I was but little acquainted with the path I was following, and had gone but a short distance when I suddenly found I had got off the track. At first I thought nothing serious of this, thinking I should come out all right. But as I kept on going deeper and deeper into the forest, a suspicion forced itself upon me as a fact—I was lost!"

"When I found I had lost my way, then, there seemed no hope for me; but still I kept on, paying little attention to the way I went, only watching and praying for something to turn up to help me."

"I ran on some distance farther, when I came out into a large opening in the forest. I could do no better than to cross it, so I kept on toward the other side, which I saw was a wild, broken tract of land; and I thought if I could keep clear of my mad pursuer till I reached it, perhaps then I might elude him."

"When I had got nearly two-thirds the way across the opening, I saw there was no hope of my reaching the other side; for the madman was so close upon me that I could sense to feel his hot breath fan my cheek. Twice had I resolved to turn and make at least one struggle for my life; but, while there is life, there is hope, so I had kept on till then, when I suddenly found myself on the brink of a precipice. Ten feet below me was a sunken, miry hole. To turn back was sure death, therefore I did not hesitate, but sprang out as far as I could into the mire below. The madman, with a wild, terrific yell, quickly followed; but fortunately for me, he did not come within reach."

"My first thought, after making my unexpected leap, was to get out of the mire, thinking the madman would be upon me. But there I was mistaken, for I soon found we were both stuck fast in the mud."

"The madman filled the air with his hideous, frantic cries, as, in his vain endeavors to free himself, he sunk deeper and deeper into the mire. I had tried my best to get out, and was about to give up my case as a hopeless one, when I suddenly found there was one chance for me. By leaving my boots in the mud, I might, perhaps, get out. Of course, I did not hesitate to do that; and thus, with some difficulty, I succeeded in reaching solid footing. But not so with my mad pursuer, who, as I have said, was barefooted, and did not have that chance of escape."

"Knowing that I could do nothing for the madman alone, I started back, to find my way to camp. But that would have been no easy task, if I had not run across a party of the miners, who were out searching for Amory; having learned that morning he had gone mad, and was running wild in the woods."

"I led them to the place where I had left poor Amory; but when we got there, he was dead. In his frantic efforts to free himself he had, probably, exhausted his strength, and fell over into the mire, for he was nearly out of sight."

"With sorrowful hearts we went back to the mines; and from that time to this, the place has been known as 'The Madman's Leap.'"

"KNOW THYSELF."

That great educator, profound thinker, and vigorous writer, Herbert Spencer, has wisely said: "As vigorous health and its accompanying high spirits are larger elements of happiness than any other things whatever, the teaching how to maintain them is a teaching that yields to no other whatever."

This is a sound sentiment, and one great want of the present age is the popularization of Physiological, Hygienic and Medical science. No subject is more practical—none comes nearer home to every man and woman than this. "The People's Common Sense Medical Adviser, in Plain English, or Medicine Simplified," by R. V. Pierce, M. D., is a book well calculated to supply a manifest want, and will prove eminently useful to the masses. It contains about nine hundred pages, is illustrated with about two hundred wood-cuts and fine colored plates, is printed upon good paper, and well bound. It is a complete compendium of anatomical, physiological, hygienic and medical science, and embodies the latest discoveries and improvements in each department. It has been the author's aim to make the work instructive to the masses, and hence the use of technical terms has been, as far as possible, avoided, and every subject brought within the easy comprehension of all. An elevated tone pervades the entire book. While it freely discusses, in a scientific manner, the origin, reproduction and development of man, it does not cater to depraved tastes, perverted passions or idle curiosity, but treats in a chaste and thorough manner, all those delicate physiological subjects, a proper knowledge of which acquaints us with the means for preserving health, and furnishes incentives to a higher and nobler life. The author, who is also the publisher of his work, anticipating a very large sale for it, has issued twenty thousand copies for the first edition, and is thus enabled to offer it (post-paid) at one dollar and fifty cents per copy—a price less than the actual cost of so large a book, if published in only ordinary-sized editions. The large number of subscribers received for it in advance of its publication, has very nearly exhausted the first edition almost as soon as out, and those desiring a copy of it will do well to address the author, at Buffalo, N. Y., without delay.

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A CUTTING EPISTLE.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I never loved you very well—
(A lie, I loved her very dearly.)
This truth I'm very glad to tell—
(Alas, it killed me, very nearly.)
I called, but never thought you fair—
(She was the fairest of all creatures)—
For one so plain what could I care?
(But oh, what quietly form and features!)

I well can live without you now—
(I could not see the lines for crying.)
I'm glad it's over anyhow—
(I wrote that line with bitter sighing.)

My care was but an idle freak—
(A very deep and holy pastime.)
I care no more with you to speak—
(Oh, had we spoken for the last time?)

I smile and let you go your way—
(I wept, and I no more go with her!)

Do as you will I've naught to say—
(Ah, much had we but been together!)

Love some one else if you can love—
(I would have died if she had done so.)
Seek some one else and faithful prove—
(I would have seen but sorry fun, so.)

I hardly care to look at you—
(I would have swam the Straits of Dover!)

My words to you were never true—
(There never was a truer lover.)

I'll prove to you that I am gay,
(I then was looking up my razor.)
And lively from this happy day—
(Oh, how I envied Nebuchadnezzar!)

I'm very glad that all is done,
(Was that glorious good for a sad liver?)
And feel as glorious as the sun.
(I thought of jumping in the river.)

I never loved you as you guessed—
(She was all time my wifely friend!)

Farwell, I feel relieved and bliss—
(And next night went and begged her mercy!)

LEAVES

From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

VII.—A Ghost on the Witness Stand.

"What do you think of that?" said Lewis Ayres, one morning, as we sat in the office, looking over the usual morning mail.

He handed me a delicate sheet of note paper on which was traced in a neat, lady's hand, the following:

"ILLUM, February 12, 18—.
"GENTLEMEN:—The writer hereof is desirous of consulting with either or both of you in regard to a legal matter of great importance. Strict secrecy is essential. Will you, therefore, please call at No. 27 Oak street this evening, at nine o'clock promptly? Inquire at door for MARY G—."

"Humph!" I exclaimed, doubtfully, "secret business, eh! It must be a strange business, indeed, if the lady cannot call at our office. I shall not go; you can do as you please about it, Lewis."

"Twenty-seven Oak street is a highly respectable neighborhood," said Ayres. "If I recollect rightly, Dr. Mason lives there. At any rate, I am just romantic enough to wish to know what will come of it, so I will go," and Lewis laughed at my assumed look of indifference.

"All right," I responded; "keep a sharp look-out, Lew, and remember, if she means business, she will have money to pay a reasonable retainer."

And, thinking no more about the matter, I proceeded with the current office business of the day, and prepared some briefs for the next day's court.

The next morning I found Ayres at the office, and as I entered, a smile full of meaning lit up his face.

"Well, tell us all about it," I demanded. "Before I tell the story, let me show you this," he said, producing a roll of bills.

"Retainer?"

"Yes sir, and a handsome fee to come," he said, proudly.

"Well, what is the case?" and I seated myself leisurely, with my feet elevated upon a table, lawyer fashion, and puffed away at my cigar, while Ayres told me the result of his mysterious visit.

"I called promptly on time at No. 27, and my ring was answered by a little mulatto girl, to whom I stated my errand, and she conducted me up-stairs, and into a fine waiting room, and then left me. I was growing impatient at the delay, when a rear door opened, and in stepped a lady, closely veiled.

"Mr. Ayres, I presume?" she began.

"Yes, madam. I have called in answer to your note."

"Ah! yes. I am obliged to you for the kindness. Don't think it strange, my dear sir, if I retain this veil. The success of my undertaking requires that no one see my features until a proper time, which I hope will soon come."

"Then she told me what she wanted in the way of legal assistance, and her story is like this:

"Some five years ago she was living in a distant village with an uncle, a very eccentric, and, withal, penurious man, who was her legal guardian. She at that time had a twin brother who had gone to the gold-diggings in California, and these two were sole heirs to a large property. At length a rumor came that the brother was lost on his return voyage, and from that time the guardian treated her with the utmost cruelty, and even attempted her life. As her uncle he would be sole heir to her fortune if she was out of the way, and to accomplish this desired end he plotted against her life.

"The villain at length succeeded, as he supposed. Her body was found horribly mutilated, and the features defaced, and as the house was robbed at the same time, it was generally understood that the robbers had murdered her, and fled with her booty.

"Five years passed away, and the murderer has been gloating over his ill-gotten gains, secure in their possession, as he supposed, by the death of his wards.

"But the lost boy now comes and lays claim to the estate. The case is already on for trial. An attorney from the city has been managing the case, but a sudden sickness prevents his attendance, and by his advice, this lady retains us to attend the matter."

"What attorney?" I asked.

"Your old friend—Martin Trench."

"Martin Trench!—so, so—well?"

"The case comes up this term for trial, and this guardian—I forgot to tell you, his name is Zachary Weeks—has retained Leex & Brief to defend him. The plaintiff, Mr. George Seldon, will call and see us in a day or two, as he is now in the city, and this mysterious lady will remain *in cog*, until she is called upon to testify."

"Zachary Weeks, you say, is the guardian?"

"Yes sir."

"I've heard of him before. He is either crazy or very eccentric."

Two days afterward, a tall, bearded stranger stepped into the office, and introduced him-

self as George Seldon, and gave us the full particulars of this very singular case.

His story was in confirmation of that told to Lewis Ayres by the veiled lady. He had been suddenly stricken down, at the mines, by a fever, and hence the report of his death. On arriving at San Francisco, chance threw him in the way of his sister, who had gone thither in search of him, and together they had returned to court the would-be murderer.

Her presence was to remain a secret until the time of trial, when the murderer was to be arraigned face to face with his supposed victim.

Ayres rubbed his hands in glee at the prospect of defeating our old enemies, Leex & Brief, and, until the day of trial came, he was almost unfit for any other business.

I noticed that by some means Ayres found it necessary to visit No. 27 Oak street quite frequently, and at length I questioned him about it.

"Have you seen beyond the veil, Lewis?" I asked one day, after he had spoken of the mysterious lady.

A deep blush mantled his cheeks at the very pointed question.

"That is a leading question, Smith, and always overruled on direct examination," he said. "Well, you might as well overrule it fully now, as your cheeks have impeached you."

"Well, as you are the questioner, I'll not refuse. I have seen behind that veil. It is no longer worn now when I call. You understand, Smith, even if you are a dried up old bachelor," and laughing at his joke on me, he grew more confidential in relation to the lady, and I was satisfied that the removal of that veil had been the cause of Lewis Ayres losing his heart.

But I was not disposed to chaff him further about it, knowing full well that a short time would reveal the whole story.

The returned Californian was a lion in the society of Illum. He sported the best clothes, drove the nicest team, and was at once taken into best circles.

With Lewis Ayres he was a frequent companion, and I even saw Lewis in a fine turnout with the veiled lady for company. She became the subject of many strange surmises, and the town was full of rumors as to her probable identity, but no one could boast of having seen her face.

On this subject Lewis was as close as an oyster, and no amount of questioning by his associates could induce him to speak of her.

So, by the time the day of trial came, public interest was worked up to a high pitch, and the court-room was filled with a curious crowd.

Leex and Brief were promptly on hand, and were accompanied by their client, Zachary Weeks.

A glance at Weeks would reveal to any observer a singular character. He carried in his face a craven, cowardly look, and his bent form and long, bony hands stamped him as a covetous, miserly wretch. A wary, idiotic stare lurked in his small eyes, and seemed to belie his known propensity for shrewdness.

The day was consumed in preliminary arguments, and the impugning of a jury, during which I was surprised at the shrewdness and wit of my young partner, Lewis Ayres. I felt a pardonable pride in the young man, and I saw that he was creating a favorable impression on the expectant public.

The next day, all being in readiness, the taking of testimony for the claimant began.

George Seldon was put through a rigid cross-examination by Leex & Brief, but never wavered from his story. Documents and witnesses were produced to establish his identity, and the case for the plaintiff rested.

Zachary Weeks next testified, and told a very creditable story. His manner showed that he was a man of some natural talent, and, becoming warmed up in the relation of his care and love for the wards entrusted to him, and his eloquent lament over their unhappy fate, he swayed the jury, until I began to fear that he would carry his case by his splendid acting.

I was amazed that a creature so abject in every look could display such powers of language, and his relation of the sad death of his ward by the foul assassin drew tears to the eyes of jurors and spectators.

I feared for my young friend Lewis, when he came to the cross-examination of this man. But he seemed cool and collected, and his handsome face was lightened up by a smile of evident satisfaction as he questioned the eloquent guardian.

"Do you believe that the spirits from the unknown world ever visit those who have wronged them here?" asked Lewis, standing in front of the old hypocrite, and looking steadily into his snaky eyes.

Weeks pale visibly, and it was plain that the question had touched the superstitious side of his nature.

"I have never seen anything of the kind," he slowly answered the old man, as if trying to make out Ayres' intention.

"Let me call to your mind a scene," continued Ayres. "It is a large chamber in an old mansion house. The hour is midnight, but a feeble light in the room shows a beautiful maiden sitting in a chair, asleep, with the various articles of dress lying near. The candle flickers and burns low, as the chamber door is slowly opened and the stealthy form of a man enters and approaches the sleeping figure from behind. A cruel knife glitters in his hand, and he raises it for the fatal blow."

At this the hush of death pervaded the crowded court-room, and all eyes were bent on Lewis, and the wretched old man, who began to tremble before him.

"The glittering blade descends; a convulsive shudder, and all is o'er. The blood of that innocent maiden dyes the rich carpet; the candle gives its last feeble ray, and then all is dark—"

"Look—old man, your victim has found you at last!" pointing to the silent, white figure of a female that stood near, with her cold, fixed eyes staring at the trembling old man.

A silence even more intense reigned for a moment as all gazed on this tableau.

Paler grew the blanched face of Weeks as his eyes seemed fixed on the white figure that confronted him. His jaw dropped, and large drops of perspiration stood out on his forehead.

"It is he!" he gasped, "Eva Seldon, arisen from her grave to confront me. Back! Oh, God help me!" as the white figure seemed to glide toward him.

"Ha, the curse of gold! I killed her. I murdered her for her gold. It is mine! mine! ah-ha—"

He was a raving maniac!

With difficulty the officers overpowered him; the strength of a dozen men seemed to lie in his bony arms, as, with frothing lips, he raved and cursed.

The ghostly figure of Eva Seldon sunk back in a swoon, as Lewis Ayres sprang to her aid. The commotion was terrible in the crowd of excited people, and as the madman was borne

away, the room was soon emptied of the surging mass.

Still pale from her excitement, Eva Seldon testified to the scene so terribly depicted by Ayres.

The murdered girl was her servant-maid, who had borrowed some of her garments to attend an evening party—and returning to her chamber, had been mistaken by the murderer for his niece.

Lying in her bed, Eva Seldon had witnessed the horrid deed, and had fled for her life, and spent years in fruitless search for her brother.

The superstitious mind of Zachary Weeks had given way at sight of her face, and death found him in the mad-house.

The brother and sister took possession of their rightful inheritance, and Lewis Ayres took possession of the ghostly witness, who is now his wife.

"Smith, your turn will come, some day," he often says to me.

"I hope I won't marry a ghost," is my feeble retort.

Mrs. Gregg's New Dress.

BY EREN E. REXFORD.

"I TELL you what it is, Amanda, I can't stand it, and what's more, I won't, so there!"

After which declaration of independence Mr. Gregg blew his nose vigorously, and tried to look as firm as the rock of Gibraltar.

"But I tell you, Mr. Samuel Gregg," said his wife, in nowise discouraged by his declaration, "I've got to have a new dress, and I'm going to, if I die for it. Do you suppose, Samuel Gregg, that I'm going to see Mrs. Poddle by and Dr. Strong's wife, and half the ladies in town, with new dresses, and I go without? You're mistaken, if you do. I'm a woman of spirit, and when I set about it, I'm bound to carry my plans into operation, and I'm going to have a new dress. You see if I don't, Samuel Gregg."

Mr. Gregg looked sternly upon the partner of his life.

"You don't reason about the matter at all," he exclaimed. "You don't take into consideration the fact that times are close—"

"Yes," put in Mrs. Gregg. "Times are always close when I want anything. But you don't think of that when you see fit to invest. You seem to think I can wear old clothes forever."

"But you don't consider when you purchase a dress that half the money would buy an article really twice as serviceable in three cases out of four. It's all for looks that you select anything. Now I go in for good bargains. I don't care a fig for the looks. What I'm after is a first-rate article, and one that can be bought at a sensible price. Now if you had the first idea of economy, you could go to some store where everything wasn't sold with regard to style, and get you splendid dresses for half the price you pay now. Mrs. Shaw got her a beautiful dress last week at one of those stores, and got it cheap, too. Mrs. Shaw's a good woman to economize."

Mrs. Gregg smiled disdainfully.

"I hope you didn't think that dress of Mrs. Shaw's a beauty? If you did, you'd be satisfied with anything. I never saw such a horrid-looking thing! She hasn't the least particle of taste, and her clothes cost her more, every year, than mine do."

"You're wild to make such an assertion," said Mr. Gregg, loftily. "I think I am something of a judge as to what looks well and what doesn't, and I can safely say that Mrs. Shaw is the best dressed lady in our set."

"I've a good mind to get a dress just like hers, and see what you'd think of it," said Mrs. Gregg, scornfully.

"I wish you would have the good sense to do so," said her husband, who, to tell the truth, hadn't the faintest idea as to what Mrs. Shaw's dress looked like. But he could quote it as a model if he didn't know anything about it; and having stuck his stakes he wasn't going to back down.

"Well, if you'll give me the money, I'll get me one just like hers, to please you," said Mrs. Gregg, smiling in a way he couldn't quite understand. He proceeded to count out the money, however, feeling that he had come off victorious, and that at last he had got Mrs. Gregg to attempt to economize. Mr. Gregg's hobby was economy. He always practiced it.

He bought his clothes at "great bargains," and in consequence never looked well-dressed, and somehow his "great bargains" always proved great failures. His clothes were always falling to pieces, and getting dilapidated generally, long before they ought to. But he couldn't see that they really cost him more than a good article would, which brought a higher price at first, but wore twice as long, and had the advantage of looking stylish and tasteful.

Mrs. Gregg went out and made her purchase, and for a week was busy over the making up of her "great bargain."

"I wish you would ask Mr. and Mrs. Shaw over to tea some evening this week," said Mr. Gregg, one day. "I would like to see you more intimate with them. Ask her over to spend the afternoon, and I'll bring him with me, and we'll have a pleasant little game of whist in the evening."

In consequence, Mrs. Gregg, and I'll wear my new dress, just to please you, Samuel," she added, with another of those queer smiles he couldn't exactly understand. "I've had it made exactly like Mrs. Shaw's. You know you gave her the credit of having the best taste of any woman in town, and you're a judge."

Mr. Gregg looked at her inquiringly. He was half-inclined to think there was sarcasm in her words and manner, but she looked quite innocent and honest.

Evening came, and with it Mr. Gregg and Mr. Shaw. Mrs. Gregg was in the parlor entertaining her visitor. She rose up to receive Mr. Shaw, with a profusion of smiles and pleasant words, while Mr. Gregg looked on in dismay.

Mrs. Gregg had always been considered a very pretty woman. More than once he had heard her quoted as a model of good taste. He never cared how he looked, but he had always been a pretty proud of her. Now he couldn't say that her apparel enhanced her good-looks any. She had on a sky-blue silk, trimmed with a profusion of ruffles and puffs, with a knot of red—positively red—ribbon in her hair, and a yellow silk necktie about her collar. She looked actually sallow by lamplight, in her bright-blue dress. The colors in her hair and at her throat positively glared at him. She looked dowdy, somehow.

He couldn't see a trace of good taste in her toilet, unless it was in the arrangement of her hair, and that ugly red ribbon spoiled that. He looked at Mrs. Shaw, and she actually seemed the double of his wife. Mrs. Gregg had copied her toilet to perfection.

"Don't I look well, to-night?" she whispered

to her liege lord, when an opportunity presented itself. "You know Mrs. Shaw has splendid taste. I've made my dress just like hers to please you."

Mr. Gregg began to understand that his wife had caught him in his own trap. How she looked, tricked out like a rainbow. Before, it had always rested him to look at her, with her soft, quiet, tastefully-blended colors. Now the harshness of blue and yellow and red made his eyes ache.

"I'll never pretend to dictate again about your dress, if you'll promise to burn up that horrid thing," he said that night, when their visitors were gone.

"Why, it was just like Mrs. Shaw's, and she's got splendid taste, you know," said Mrs. Gregg, pretending to be much astonished. "I saw that you could scarcely keep your eyes off me the whole evening, and congratulated myself that you were admiring me."

"You know better," said Mr. Gregg, faintly. "I see I made a fool of myself by meddling with something I didn't understand. If you'll promise to never wear this dress again, I'll give you money to buy one to suit yourself to-morrow."

"Agreed!" exclaimed Mrs. Gregg. "I never liked this. I only wore it to please you."

"But your other dresses do cost so much," sighed Mr. Gregg, as he counted out the money.

"Samuel Gregg," said his wife, solemnly, "you're a poor, ignorant man. This dress has cost me five dollars more than any dress I've had in a year. A good, nice dress doesn't require much more than half the amount of cloth that such a dress as this does, because such a dress as I refer to is tasty and stylish without being covered with ruffles and puffs and beads and gewgaws. Mrs. Shaw's dresses for me past year have cost her a good deal more than mine have, and she's made 'great bargains' every time. But she hasn't had a dress that looked decent, in all that time; but she doesn't know it. I tell you what it is, Samuel, you men don't know every thing."

To which assertion Mr. Gregg yielded an ungracious assent.

He doesn't quote Mrs. Shaw's economy so often now. When he does, Mrs. Gregg speaks about her new dress, and he subsides.

Heroes of History.

II.—The Knight Bayard.

"Fearless and Stainless."

In Bayard we have a true hero, the more noble in character from his contrast with the age in which he lived. All the beauty and romance of chivalry was passing away when Bayard was born, and if he was the truest knight of all, he was also the last. With his death chivalry vanished, never to return. No one but Bayard could live up to its standard, and so they threw it down, and laughed at it and ridiculed it. Then came Cervantes and wrote Don Quixote, and killed its last remnant by belying its spirit.

It becomes interesting to us modern practical Americans to ask, what was this chivalry, that ruled the world so long? Chivalry was nothing but the gentle influence of Christianity and Woman, combining to rob war of its worst features, preaching mercy to the conquered, help to the oppressed, courtesy to all women, because Christ's mother was a woman, courage and patience, because Christ was brave and patient, prayer and almsgiving, because Christ ordered it. A perfect knight was a perfect Christian, and such was Bayard.

This was pure chivalry. Unfortunately, in its best times, there was little of it. Most knights were rough, cruel barbarians, proud only of being noble in blood, and brave only because they were big and strong. The bad knights brought disgrace on the name of chivalry, and many people nowadays condemn it for what it was not. Had it not been for the vows of chivalry, these same fierce barons would have been much worse. Those vows served to restrain them from much villainy and cruelty. Chivalry only failed, because human nature was too selfish to live up to its rules, just as the Christianity of Christ has been debased ever since He left the earth.

Pierre du Terrail, surnamed, from his little estate of Bayard, the Chevalier de Bayard, was born in France, in 1476, at the Chateau de Bayard, in the province of Dauphiny. He came of a line of warriors. His grandfather was the English at Poitiers, his father had been one of the knights of Joan of Arc, when she drove out the same English. Young Bayard was brought up in the atmosphere of chivalry, and his soul was that of a knight, when only a boy. When he was thirteen, his father, who felt himself near his end, sent for his four children, and asked them what professions they wished to choose. The answers recorded of each show what Bayard was, already.

The eldest son was good and quiet. He said he "only wished to stay at home as long as he lived, and enjoy his inheritance peacefully, when his parents died."

Pierre was the second.

"My father," he said, his face flushing, his eyes full of tears, "I hold a name that has never been sullied by any of the ancestors who have borne it, who have also glorified it by innumerable feats of arms. Give me only leave to *try and imitate them*. That is my wish. I hope by the grace of God, never to take one sparkle from the glory of those of whose deeds I have heard so often."

These words from the lips of a boy of thirteen are amazing. Family pride, in them, appears as a shining virtue, instead of vanity. The boy was so proud to come from brave gentlemen, that he was determined to live like them. His father, poor gentleman, shed tears at the lad's earnestness.

"My son," said he, "you are already in face and figure like your grandfather, who was one of the most accomplished knights of his time. I am rejoiced at your resolution, and I will do all I can to forward your wishes, by placing you in the house of some prince, where you will learn all noble and manly exercises, befitting a knight."

The good gentleman lost no time. Through the influence of his father and uncle, Pierre made a page at the court of the Duke of Savoy, where he went, two days later, mounted and equipped by his uncle, the Bishop of Grenoble, who seems to have been very fond of the boy. In those days a page had to wait at table and serve his elders, as well as to learn to ride and fight.

He was expected to wait on the ladies especially, and to their influence is owing all the softness and courtesy of the best knights in after days. Young Bayard owed still more to the counsel of his mother, when he left home, a counsel which he made the rule of his after life. She told him: "Above all, to serve God first, to pray to him night and day, to be kind and charitable to all, to beware of flatterers, and never to become one himself, to avoid

envy, hatred and lying, as vices unworthy of a Christian, and to comfort widows and orphans."

These words, and countless courage, were the rule of Bayard's life. Can we nowadays, with all our money-making advice, give better rules?

Now young Bayard is fairly launched at the court of Savoy, tilting with his fellow-pages like a man, serving his elders as humbly as a child. He was so graceful and manly, he soon became a favorite.

Six months after, the Duke of Savoy visited the court of Charles VIII, king of France, and took with him young Bayard, who had become the best rider of all the pages of his train. One day, when on his journey, with one of the king's gentlemen, the duke mentioned how his boy of fourteen could outstride the oldest knights. The gentleman looking doubtful, the duke called to Bayard, who rode near, "Piquez, Bayard, piquez!" (Spur, Bayard, spur!) Without asking why or wherefore, the page drove in his spurs, and away dashed his fiery horse like an arrow, while Bayard galloped round the train, leaped a ditch, and brought the animal back, dancing and capering, while the boy sat as if he grew in the saddle. The king's gentleman was charmed, and said how glad the king would be to have Bayard for a page. At once the duke said his majesty could have him, and arranged with the count that the king should see him next day. Bayard heard all this, and the duke privately warned him to dress in his best, and make his horse look its best, to please the king. The kind duke was sorry to lose Bayard, but glad to see him advanced.

It shows how kind and good the lad must have been, when the very grooms of the duke loved him. One of these old fellows insisted on cleaning the lad's horse, fit for a king to ride, and shed tears as he hid him good-by. Bayard reached the meadow of Ainay, as the king and his suite came there in barges, on their way to vespers.

"There, your majesty, is my page," said the Duke, smiling.

"He is young," said the king. "Can he manage that horse at speed?"

For Bayard's horse was a fiery war-steed, accustomed to the weight of a knight in armor.

The duke laughed. "Ay, and a dozen more. Bid him spur, your majesty."

The king beckoned up the lad. Up came young Bayard, slight and delicate in looks, with sparkling black eyes and dark curls, his slender figure swaying to the motion of the horse. The king smiled, and motioned him to turn his horse.

"Now for it, duke," he said. "Page, my friend, piquez, donc, piquez!"

All the other pages, boy-like, wanted to frighten his horse. In a shrill chorus they screamed out, "piquez, donc, piquez!"

Young Bayard smiled proudly, reined in the fiery horse, and spurred him. Up went the charger in a grand bound, and away went Bayard round the meadow, before the eyes of the envious pages, controlling the steed with a grace and dexterity that none of them could equal, while the king clapped his hands, delighted, and swore that the duke's present was fit for any king.

From this little incident, Bayard became a page to the king, and acquired the nickname of "Piquez," which he was called till he grew a man. He remained a page for three years, when he was made a man-at-arms, and thence rose to be the best captain in the French service.

The rest of his history is but a succession of gallant deeds in the field. He never was beaten, and his advice saved many an incompetent leader from defeat. When he was at last slain by a musket-shot, his loss was more than that of an army to France. She had many armies, but only one Bayard.

It is not on his talents in the field that we love to dwell, but on that nobler part of his character which gave him his title, "Fearless and spotless." In all the range of history there is no lovelier character than Bayard, who devoted his life to his country, with no ambition save to become a perfect knight. Poor as he was, the son of a poor gentleman, whenever he received money he distributed it to the needy, reserving for himself only his horses and arms. He never insulted a woman, and rescued hundreds from dishonor, at a time when war was at its most brutal pash. Chivalry was dead. War was nothing but savage murder. Bayard, alone, in the midst of a depraved time, lived such a life that the very soldiers revered him as next to an angel.

May every American imitate him.